

A Century of Grace





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To Mrs. Blawell  
Best wishes for  
good health and happiness

Frances Goddard

October, 1961

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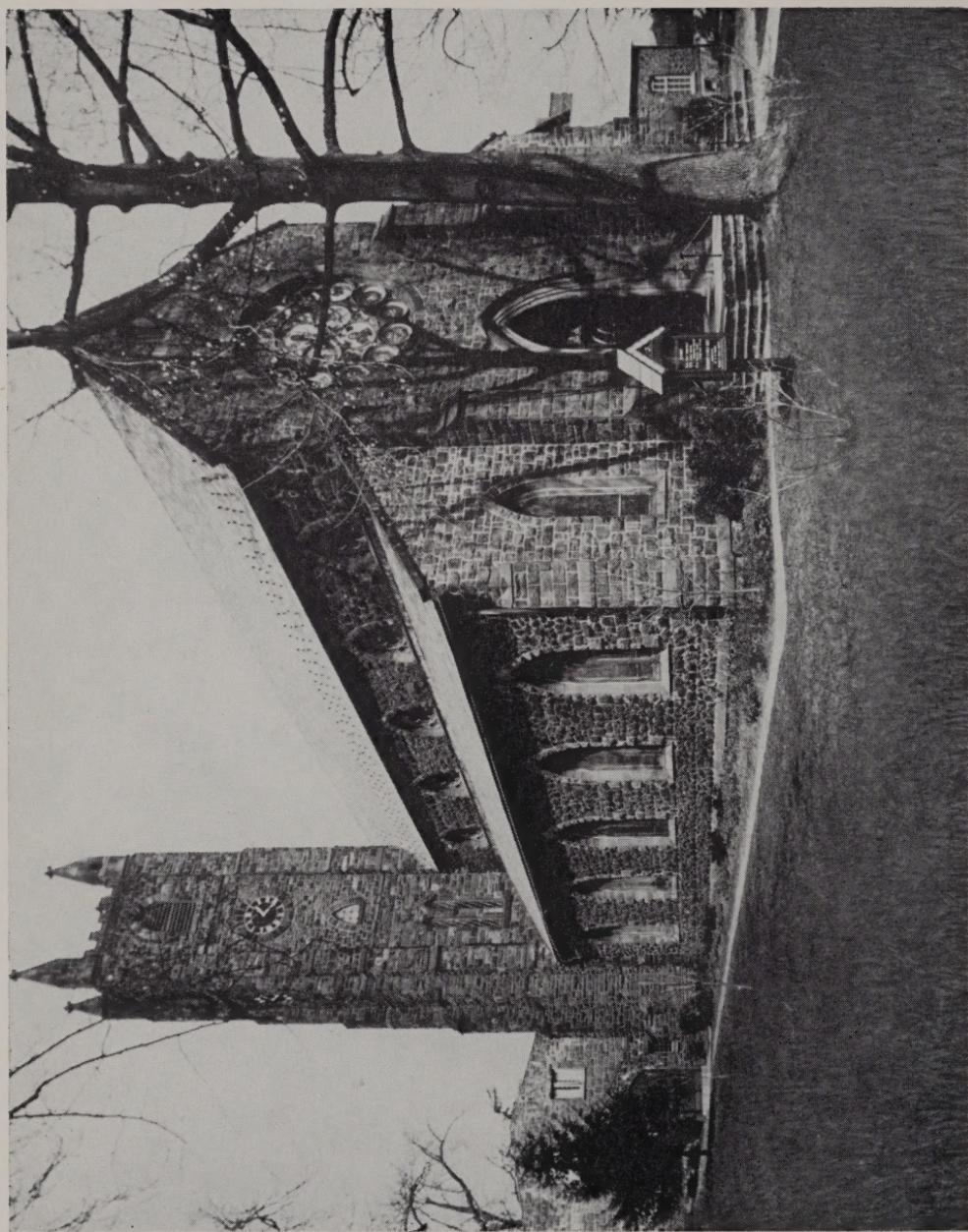
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# A Century of Grace

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

NYACK, NEW YORK

*Published by*  
**GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**NYACK, NEW YORK**

**1961**

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**TRIGGS COLOR PRINTING CORPORATION**  
**NEW YORK**

## *FOREWORD*

THE RIGHT REVEREND HORACE W. B. DONEGAN  
BISHOP OF NEW YORK

It is a great pleasure to write a brief foreword to this book commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Grace Church, and to express to the Rector, Vestry, and congregation my affectionate greetings and hearty congratulations upon this significant occasion.

Through years momentous in the life of our country and of our Church, the Christian witness of this Parish has shone forth bright and clear. The tradition of our Church is richer because of the loyalty and devotion of those who have looked upon Grace Church as their spiritual home.

It is a matter of pride and joy not only to the congregation of Grace Church but to all who have the religious welfare of the people at heart, to know that Grace Church has with the blessing of God been a power for good to so many for so long.

Never has the leadership and influence of the Church been more necessary than at this moment. The minds of the people must be turned increasingly toward religion and morality as the fundamental moving forces in a truly civilized world.

The immediate years ahead may in some ways be the hardest that this nation has ever faced. What the American people do may be the determining factor as to whether or not humanity goes forward or retrogresses. Progress cannot be made nor the proper decision taken without spiritual and Divine guidance. The Church must therefore play a large part in creating what we all hope will be a more peaceful, orderly, and tolerant world.

Grace Church has a noble heritage and it is our hope, and belief, and prayer, that its future may be even finer than its past.

## *THE AUTHORS*

During his years as Rector, the Reverend Claxton Monroe often expressed the hope that a history of Grace Church would be written. As the centennial approached, Mr. Tarlton F. Parsons, the Senior Warden, decided that a history of the first hundred years should be a part of the centennial celebration. He requested the Rector's Aides to undertake the preparation of the history as a special project.

The Rector's Aides chose from among their members a committee of four to research and write the history. A CENTURY OF GRACE is the contribution of these four:

Anne R. Adams (Chapters III, IX)

Faith H. Harvie (Chapters I, V, VIII)

Bartlett R. Leber (Chapters II, IV, X, XI)

Ann W. Owens (Introduction and Chapters VI, VII, XII)

The lists of Wardens and Memorials were compiled by Barbara M. Furstenberg.

## *ACKNOWLEDGMENTS*

We wish to thank the many, many persons who searched their memories, their files, and their attics to help us write this book.

We are particularly indebted to the late George L. McCoy, whose unpublished biography of Franklin Babbitt saved us a great deal of difficult research.

We were aided by the time, efforts, and records made available to us by The Reverend Robert S. Boscher and Dr. Niels H. Sonne of the General Theological Seminary, Robert G. Wheeler of the Sleepy Hollow Restoration, Miss Alice Bonnell and Miss Mary Hartmen of Columbia University, The Very Reverend Jesse McL. Trotter of the Virginia Theological Seminary, Mrs. Harold Staples of Saco, Maine, and Mrs. Lloyd Lowndes.

Mrs. Colin MacRae (Elizabeth Brown-Serman) contributed generously to the chapter on her father and Dr. Samuel M. Shoemaker added to the chapter on Mr. Monro.

Miss Grace Morse, Mrs. Charlotte Crawford, and Mrs. Edward Schuster were particularly helpful in the chapters on Mr. Babbitt.

We are most appreciative for the constant interest and co-operation extended to us by the staff of the Nyack Public Library.

For the following photographs we are indebted to Louis F. Stockmeyer: Grace Church, The Altar, The Bradley Chapel.

Finally, there are the members of Grace Church Parish who are too numerous to name. We are grateful to each one who assisted us, and especially to the Rector's Aides, who typed our manuscripts and generally encouraged us all the way; and to Albert E. Furstenberg and William A. Owens, who guided the book through the press.

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*“An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.”*  
—EMERSON

Who is this man? What sort of person is he?

As we of Grace Church, looking back from 1961 over the past century see him, he is a small wiry Yankee named Franklin Babbitt, who defied his Vestry and returned their shipment of Haverstraw bricks for the new church because he had decided on red granite Gothic; a compassionate Man of God who hired rather than punished the man whose child stole a pine from the church grounds for a family Christmas Tree; an artist so dedicated to his self-appointed task of building a perfect House of Worship that the smallest details were sought out, copied, sketched, and finally executed — with no compromise for expediency of time or money. Here is the man who could give freely of his time, his energy, food, even the coal to heat his house, but who insisted on having the choir rehearse his funeral music (he had chosen the anthem) when he knew his time on earth was drawing to a close. He was a man of contrasts, as is the institution he founded in 1861.

Not towering on one of Rockland County's mountains, nor resting complacently on the commanding west bank of the Hudson River, Grace Church sits on a small out-of-the-way corner in the village of Nyack. An arm's length from the business center, a landmark from the river, it is both the fulfilled dream of one persistent and dedicated man and the accomplished hard work of countless laborers and parishioners.

To approach Grace Church from the river, one comes up a narrow one-way street lined with plain clapboard houses close to the sidewalk.

Suddenly one is face to face with an English Gothic building. Behind a low tidy privet hedge that might surround the smallest

cottage, a wide walk leads up to huge carved oak doors, in a Gothic frame that points to a stained glass Rose Window, a replica of one in Lincoln Cathedral.

Through the vestibule and into the nave one stops at the foot of the main and center aisle, facing north, facing the altar. Gothic arches of oak, forty feet high at the peak, are supported by twelve granite columns, patterned from Westminster Abbey, symbolizing the twelve Apostles. The pews, of carved oak, are copied from early Saxon benches found in Surrey. In the side walls of the church are stained glass memorial windows, a style copied from Tintern Abbey.

In true Gothic intent the eye is drawn past these, past the brass pulpit, past the choir stalls and the organ to the remarkable walls of the chancel. For here, rising above the carved marble reredos, above the marble altar, and framing the stained glass chancel window, is a mosaic mural of a beauty rarely encountered in American churches. In tiny one-inch marble pieces two grape vines, in full foliage, on a cream background, bear the Six Fruits of the Holy Ghost: *Temperentia, Justitia, Fortitudo, Prudentia, Misericordia, and Humilitas*. Above them are the Greek symbols, Alpha and Omega, and arched over the whole is *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*. At the very peak directly beneath the point of the arch is a dove — the symbol of Grace.

The five panels of the altar reredos show in white marble bas-relief The Last Supper, The Crucifixion, The Road To Calvary, Come Unto Me, and The Infancy of Christ. The side walls and floor of the chancel are of marble mosaic, and carry further the symbolic emblem of the Holy Trinity, the Fleur de Lis, which is found on the ends of the pews, and again on the pulpit.

This is Grace Church, Nyack, New York, and this is the story of its first one hundred years.

## I. *Founding a Parish*

On the west side of the Hudson River, some twenty-two miles north of New York City, nestled the small Dutch village of Nyack. The area had been settled by the Dutch in 1671. The village itself was founded in 1813. In 1861, a few more than two thousand persons made their permanent homes there. In May of that year the first company of volunteers left Nyack to join the Union Forces. Life in the village, however, was very little changed by the Civil War. As usual, summer residents came out from New York in June to stay at the Mansion House or at the newer Pavilion Hotel and brought to the village some urban gayety and their money.

With the coming of fall the Nyackers settled back to their quiet winter life. They worked at ship-building, ice-cutting, shoe-making, farming, and also in a carriage and sleigh factory and in the stone quarries along the river. On Sundays the "good" people went to their churches: the Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist, most of which had been established for forty or fifty years. The oldest was the Stone Church, founded in 1813. The river was still one of the main thoroughfares to and from the village. A steamboat service to New York had been in operation since 1827 and was to continue until 1870, when the railroad from Jersey City to Sparkill was extended to Nyack.

One fine October day a young Episcopal priest boarded the sailing sloop in Tarrytown which since 1834 had served as a ferry to Nyack. He looked out over the three-mile expanse of the Tappan Zee at the hills to the west and at the jutting, craggy hulk of Hook Mountain, which dwarfed the little village. He could see the houses and buildings of Nyack, dominated by the square tower of the Dutch Reformed Church.

This was not Franklin Babbitt's first trip to Nyack. A few months before, as curate in Christ Church, Tarrytown, he had

inquired about the village across the river. The answer was "It's an old Dutch place about fifty years behind the times." He had also found out that there was no Episcopal church in Nyack. His first trip to explore had fired his faith and determination to establish here a church of the Apostolic Succession.

Now as the fresh autumn breeze carried him on his way, he planned his dream: to found a parish where others had failed before him. The handful of Episcopalians who were permanent residents of Nyack were being administered to by the Reverend Solomon Hitchcock, Rector of the Piermont Episcopal Church (now Christ Church, Sparkill). In summer, when there were enough Episcopalians to warrant it, he conducted Sunday services in private homes. Back in the 1840's, the Episcopal Diocese in New York had assigned a single missionary to care for all the Anglican communicants in Rockland County. In 1849, the village of Piermont, seemingly a more promising location, had been selected over Nyack as the site of the first Episcopal Church. In addition to his duties as third rector of Christ Church, Mr. Hitchcock tried without success to establish a parish in Nyack. For Franklin Babbitt, all of this added up to a challenging purpose for his energies, convictions, and his interpretation of the Divine Will. The Right Reverend Horatio Potter, Bishop of New York, had tried to dissuade him, but had finally given his consent and blessings for the difficult task.

The hour or so of the trip passed quickly and the boat was moored alongside the Burd Street dock. Mr. Babbitt's possessions were few: a trunk, a carpet bag, and a couple of boxes of books. One of the crew helped him to unload and pile his luggage in a one-horse carriage. He climbed in beside the driver and asked to be taken to the home of Mr. and Mrs. William S. Stillwell.

The streets from the river up the steep bank and through the scattered houses of the village were little more than dirt roads. He drove up to the large and comfortable home, where he was met by Mr. Stillwell, soon to become one of his first

wardens, and his wife, two of his most faithful and enthusiastic supporters.

Mr. Babbitt went immediately to work. A suitable, temporary place of worship was one of his first needs. A classroom in the Rutherford Institute, a boys' school, was made available to him by Mr. Christopher Rutherford, the Headmaster. Here, on the second Sunday in October, 1861, Mr. Babbitt conducted his first service. He later recalled that "since that time, under a favoring Providence, they have never been omitted." The Academy was on Main Street, just above Franklin Street.

On October 30, Mr. Babbitt, Mr. Stillwell, and six other men organized a formal meeting for the purpose of incorporating themselves as a Religious Society in communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. William Stillwell and James G. Aspinwall were elected wardens of the new church. The duly elected vestrymen were George W. Burd, Charles Robinson, William Voorhis, T. J. Crowen, Thomas Tasman, Robert Latimer, George Wright, and Jeremiah Emery. It was resolved that these men should be known in the law as "The Rector, Wardens and Vestrymen of Grace Church in the village of Nyack in the County of Rockland." A resolution was unanimously adopted that "A building for our worship ought to be at once erected and that we will all use every exertion to accomplish the work this fall."



## II. *Preparation of a Priest*

Securing from the Bishop permission to found a parish in Nyack, organizing the election of wardens and vestrymen, and making plans for erecting a suitable church in which to hold services took much of Mr. Babbitt's time and energy. There were moments of peace, however, which gave him short periods for reflection. His hopes were high for the new venture. His own private means were ample to support him, thus removing him from any undue dependency upon his congregation and giving him an unusual opportunity for study and travel. To his practical mind, this was as it should be, and confidence sharpened his determination to accomplish his goal.

There were times when his thoughts turned to Maine, which was always close to his heart, to the village of Saco, where he was born September 25, 1829, and where he was still listed as a resident in the census of 1850. The village, near the coast, was divided by the river, which crossed the salt marshes and emptied in a rugged breakwater. It was a town of Colonial days, with handsome, gabled wooden houses and streets lined and shaded by elms. At that time it was a prosperous town, supported by cotton mills and lumbering. Along the main thoroughfare stood the large and pretentious homes of the sea captains whose vessels lay in nearby Biddeford.

His parents Benjamin Babbitt and Sarah A. Marston, both of Saco, filed marriage intentions November 9, 1827, when his father was twenty-one and his mother barely seventeen. His father's family had moved to Saco from Berkley, Massachusetts, where the Babbitt forbears had settled in 1720. His younger brother, Charles Edward, was born in 1831. Young Franklin was soon to know sadness as both his mother and small brother died shortly thereafter and his father moved away from Saco.

The young lad was taken to the home of his grandmother,

Mrs. Serena Babbitt, there to be raised. His aunt and uncle, Serena and Nathaniel Tucker, lived with them. Although members of the Congregational Church in Saco, his uncle Nathaniel Tucker had a sister married to a vestryman of Trinity Episcopal Church. We may assume that young Franklin occasionally accompanied his uncle's family to the Episcopal church and perhaps there the seeds of the Anglican faith took hold. It is interesting to note that the same Bishop Horatio Potter of New York had held the Rectorship of Trinity Church at Saco in the early years of Franklin's life.

He entered Thornton Academy, December 8, 1842, when he was thirteen, registered as Benjamin Franklin Babbitt. This school, established in 1811, was noted for its pursuit of the classics and masters well versed in English.

We do not know what brought about his decision to devote himself to God's work. The lack of a mother and father, a lonely boyhood, the tragic mortality rates of those days, may have increased his dependency upon God.

During these years he found himself thinking more often of God. His decision to enter the priesthood had come slowly. An awakening wonder of the Presence had come first, troubling him with its intensity. Later this growing promise, this awareness of God he had found in the hearts of his townspeople, always visible in the faces of the children. In the growing certainty that comes in sudden fullness, he humbly dedicated himself to serve with all the strength he could muster and with determination born and bred of his New England heritage. The course before him had become sharp and channeled. He applied for permission to enter seminary and in the fall of 1850 he commenced his studies for the priesthood at General Theological Seminary in New York City.

General Seminary, on Chelsea Square and Twenty-first Street, consisted of two grey stone buildings surrounded by a white picket fence. The bell was hung in the lattice framework of the gates. Through these gates he entered and the next three years

found him meekly accepting instruction and persevering in his assignments. The seminary was divided into the Juniors, the Middlers, and the Seniors. A narrow curriculum constituted the three- or four-year course. Students were required to study liturgy and pastoral care for three years. The faculty was small but dedicated: The Reverend Mr. Pearson taught the Creed; the Reverend Messrs. Beveridge and Brown gave instruction on the articles of religion. Seniors learned the doctrine of the atonement from the respected Reverend Magee.

The chapel, the center and focal place of seminary life, was simple. It was lighted by tallow candles in sconces nailed to the backs of benches. A simple wooden reredos stood behind the altar. No hangings enriched the walls. Students took turns pumping the pipe organ for services. People from surrounding homes and farms attended evensong with the students and clergy.

Franklin Babbitt was graduated from General Theological Seminary in 1853. Later in the summer of that year he was ordained deacon by Bishop Wainwright at Trinity Church in New York City.

His first assignment, the following September, was curate at St. Paul's Church in Red Hook, New York, a small country parish in Dutchess County. He was twenty-four years old and assistant to the Reverend Robert Livingston. He took up his pastoral duties with eagerness, assisted at Holy Communion, made parish calls around the countryside, taught the children, and gave his wholehearted support to his priest.

The following year a call came for him to be the assistant to the Reverend Eugene Hoffman, Rector of Christ Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and he was transferred to the Diocese of New Jersey. Mr. Hoffman, who later became Dean of the General Theological Seminary, had been a classmate and friend of seminary days. Christ Church maintained a school for thirty boys, and teaching became one of his duties. The school, in successful operation, gave instruction in all branches of thorough English education, and prepared the boys for college if

they desired. Mr. Babbitt grew fond of his students and, while preparing them for the world in secular study, he brought them constantly under the influence of the Gospels.

The year passed swiftly and on March 4, 1855, he was ordained priest at St. Mary's Church in Burlington, New Jersey. The words of the Bishop were etched in his mind: "... for they are the sheep of Christ which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His blood . . . see that ye never cease your labour, your care and diligence. . . ."

The May after his ordination he was again in the Diocese of New York, and had in his charge the small parishes of St. Mary's Church, Northcastle, and St. John's Church, Lewisboro, both mission churches of St. Matthew's in Bedford, and twelve miles apart.

St. Mary's Church had on its rolls twenty-five families, with fifty communicants. By dint of his own hard labor, within fifteen months this new missionary parish had bought and paid for a new gilt chandelier for candles, a chancel light, and melodeon. He was grateful for the large library of Sunday School books and a communion service donated by a neighboring church.

St. John's Church presented a harder challenge. The number of communicants was just thirteen. The stone building unfinished, he worked with his own hands to complete it. His own friends helped furnish it with cushions for the chancel, with prayer books, and Sunday school texts. He himself gave a Caen stone font for baptism.

His work, a never ending succession of pastoral duties, was hard, and he worried that his parishes were so far apart. He could not do all that he desired for either. Yet God favored his work in both parishes. St. John's freed itself from debt. From its few families sprang a moral force which the town of Lewisboro had never had before.

With both St. Mary's and St. John's well established, Mr. Babbitt accepted a call to become the assistant to the Reverend William Creighton, Rector of the rapidly growing Christ Church

parish of Tarrytown, New York. Among his duties at Christ Church he conducted a mission at Beekmantown, north of Tarrytown, supervised the parish school, and held morning services in the chapel. As at Elizabeth, he engaged himself zealously in teaching the boys, feeling again the familiar sympathy with their problems.

Washington Irving was a warden of Christ Church and Mr. Babbitt came to admire and respect him. He, in turn, treated his young friend and clergyman with affection and invited him to enjoy the companionship at Sunnyside, his home south of Tarrytown. The death of Irving in 1859 caused him sorrow; he missed the evenings at Sunnyside and the trusted advice of this true student of human nature.

Before his death Irving gave Mr. Babbitt some roots of the ivy that climbed the walls at Sunnyside and told him how, when he was visiting Abbotsford, his friend, Sir Walter Scott, had given him a piece of the ivy to bring and plant at his own home in America. This ivy, planted at Grace Church, Nyack, remains a reminder of Washington Irving.

All these years had been but a training, a preparation. His services as a missionary of God had progressed, and he had grown in that service. Now, in the village of Nyack, about to embark on a new venture, he fervently prayed that God's grace would be forthcoming in this his endeavor to establish the church.



### III. *Babbitt's Ruins*

Just when Mr. Babbitt envisioned the church as it is today, will never be known. But his new Parish was soon to learn that he was as practical as he was visionary. The first step was to obtain a building site, which he chose carefully and with considerable thought to the future growth of the community. This ground had a frontage on what is now Franklin Street, extending between First and Third Avenue. It was conveniently located in the little Dutch village, yet pleasantly rural.

The new church, built as soon as possible, was a small wooden structure with its entrance facing on Franklin Street. It was unadorned, almost Puritanical in its simplicity. The fourteen single pews were of hard wood, without embellishment. The altar, still preserved, was of the simplest design, and there were no kneeling benches. Yet a tremendous warmth pervaded the atmosphere. This was the first real home of a scattered Episcopalian congregation — a meeting place where the people might kneel in prayer and worship within their very own walls. The low, arched ceiling, the walls not forty feet long inspired an intimacy in the service which nurtured a close, spiritual alliance. It was here that Mr. Babbitt gained the love, admiration, and respect of his congregation which continued throughout his full half century of ministry in spite of frequent divergencies of thought.

With characteristic energy, Mr. Babbitt personally supervised the erection of this first church and it was ready for services within four months. The fact that his small congregation contributed only \$77.49 during this period apparently increased the challenge. For most certainly this young man of many talents, looking at this humble wooden structure, saw only the architectural manifestation of his dreams.

He seemed to accept quite easily, as well as quite frequently,

money grants from the Diocesan Pastoral Aid Society and interested out-of-town friends. However, he thriftily and conscientiously improvised where he could. Through these early years he was Rector, organist, choirmaster, and sexton. His desire for perfection in every endeavor made this not only a practical solution but also an accomplished one. When his responsibilities increased, he gave up serving as choirmaster and sexton, but he continued as organist for fifteen full years.

Numerically and spiritually, the young church grew rapidly. In less than a year's time, Mr. Babbitt proudly presented a class of nineteen applicants for the Sacrament of Confirmation to the astonished and pleased The Right Reverend Bishop Horatio Potter. The Parish was rapidly taking firm root in what had been considered unfertile ground. The group of skeptics, which had been among his original congregation, began to be greatly outnumbered by enthusiastic followers.

One among these was Emily Tillou, the daughter of a well-known New York lawyer. Emily's family were summer residents of Nyack. They liked the quiet of this Dutch village, so close to the bustling city of New York, yet so different in quality and pace. Mr. Tillou had three other daughters and one son. He settled his family in what became known as "Red Hill," a lovely old red house at the corner of Franklin Street and Sixth Avenue. The Tillou family began attending the little neighboring church south of them on Franklin Street.

But for Emily Tillou this was not just another church-going episode in her religious life. She immediately became fascinated with this earnest young man and his tremendous dream. It is hard to picture Franklin Babbitt in a romantic role. A man so dedicated, so purposeful, so fired with but one desire — to shepherd his flock and build a suitable monument to the Lord — would seem difficult to distract. But this, Emily Tillou was able to do. Perhaps she was as purposeful as her admiring young Rector! As she showed genuine interest and enthusiasm in the future of this young man's Parish, she caught his attention as well.

Franklin Babbitt had never felt at ease with girls in his youth. This trait, probably born of a childhood insecurity, continued into young manhood. These feelings, he imposed upon the younger generation. He saw boys only as future schemes completed. A young choir boy interested him, not only because of his tenor tone qualities, but because here was a future manifestation of a dream. He felt that boys, too, being more vulnerable than girls needed him to champion their cause. All the small girls in his congregation felt his preference for the other sex. One feminine Grace Church parishioner recalls today that in her youth Mr. Babbitt always greeted her as "Pete" — which he usually accompanied with a deep resounding slap on the back.

With this attitude to contend with, we can be sure that initially Emily was just another "fellow" member to the esteemed Mr. Babbitt. Yet her enthusiasm for his projects must have been definitely outstanding. She must have chosen to carry his banners higher and wider than the rest, for, somehow, she caught his eye and his heart. In his own words, he said, "A young woman with mildness in her countenance, modesty in her behavior, and the Christian virtues in her life, is richly endowed with any man."

Emily Tillou was tall, of rather angular frame, and only mildly pretty. But for Franklin Babbitt she possessed a quality he needed. When he realized that he and his thoughts were no longer an entity unto himself, when he saw his visions encompassing her as well, he proposed to Emily Tillou. "Even in the happiest life, there will be dark days as well as light ones," said Mr. Babbitt. "How much more can the light be enjoyed or the darkness alleviated, if we are sharing them with a devoted companion." They were married on April 9, 1866, at one o'clock in the afternoon at Trinity Church in New York City, by Bishop Horatio Potter.

Mrs. Babbitt began to give all her energies, as well as a goodly portion of a very solid bank account, toward furthering her husband's goal. Hard work and perseverance accompanied them all the way. Finally, in 1868, the first Grace Episcopal Church

of Nyack outgrew its modest walls, and it was necessary to discuss some future plans.

A frenzy of excitement developed over the building of a new church. The congregation was divided into two factions. The majority of communicants, feeling happy and even sentimental about their original church home, wanted only to enlarge it. A few stalwart souls, led anxiously by their determined Rector, preferred an entirely new building, made of stone and of a magnitude which would insure greater beauty and lasting permanence. The fact that his backing was small deterred him not in the least. His dream was big, and an innate love and deep appreciation of ecclesiastical architecture was but one of his many avocations.

With the recurrent thought of a new church firm in his mind, Mr. Babbitt had already completed a tour of English and European Cathedrals. He had thoroughly studied and assimilated the art and construction of these buildings. He was totally prepared (and had been for some time) when a special Parish meeting was called to discuss a further extension of Grace Church.

Everyone attended this meeting. Many came out of curiosity; many with only vague notions about a project to be completed in an even more vague future. Others arrived merely to be entertained — discussions could be both interesting and stimulating and not in the least costly. No matter how divergent each member's thoughts, they were unanimously agreed that, at this first Parish meeting, there could be no commitment of any sort.

How very wrong they were. How little they really knew their Yankee Rector. To the awe and bewilderment of the entire congregation, Franklin Babbitt presented a full report on a proposed new church, replete with a multitude of sketches and plans worked out in minute detail.

When his congregation questioned his wisdom in attempting so costly and so large a church, he simply quoted Genesis 28:17 “...this is none other but the house of God and this is the

gate of heaven." When they predicted that if this church were completed, it would never be filled, he would add, "The very building itself will inspire all whose hearts are open to holy inspirations. It is what a church *ought* to be—everything simple, genuine, beautiful, durable, and all in the purest style, of the only kind of architecture that has ever seemed peculiarly suitable for a church."

When some of them urged that they did not need any outward help to devotion, Mr. Babbitt replied "that they must be far more spiritual and holy than falls to the rest of us! Of course," he added, "any one can kneel down and pray to God in a barn, or in a cave, or in the open air; but there is an old, old adage which can be applied even to the worship of God. 'A place for everything, and everything in its place.' "

Mr. Babbitt could not be stopped now. There are three attributes which constitute a great man — vision, courage, and timing. Franklin Babbitt had all of these. He had already displayed great courage in pursuing his personal vision, when he sought out Nyack and established an Episcopal Church in its midst. Now, eight years later, he felt the time was right for making his first church a permanent symbol of devotion to God.

"When the children of Israel," Mr. Babbitt said, "were wandering in the wilderness, they received worship in a tent or tabernacle, but after they were settled in their Promised Land, they built with the approval of God, one of the most wonderful temples ever beheld by man. The early Christians, when they were persecuted, and had to hide in dens and caves, received worship there, but after they were free and undisturbed in their religion, what glorious temples they erected! And generally," recalled Mr. Babbitt, "wherever there has been any kind of religion, its faithful followers have felt that their temples should symbolize the greatness, the majesty and the eternity of their God!"

Who could resist the sincere pleas of such a dedicated man? Who could withstand his persuasiveness, or cease to grasp the genuineness of his perception? Within four weeks, the vestry

met and appointed a building committee of three who issued the following appeal: ". . . that each member of the congregation contribute a full day's labor or its monetary equivalent, toward making the excavations for the foundations of the new church."

The response was more than adequate. The work began at once. As the site selected for the new church was partially occupied by the original building, it was necessary to move it a few feet to make way for the new. Before winter had set in, the excavation had been finished and the cornerstone was laid with an appropriate ceremony by Bishop Horatio Potter.

The completion of Grace Church could have been expedited considerably had the Rector consented to deviate from the very conservative plan of operation which he had adopted before the first spadeful of earth had been turned.

All work on the new church was paid for as soon as the labor was completed. When no funds for building were available, building operations ceased. The major portion of money required to build and furnish the church was raised personally by the almost super-human efforts of the Rector. In his own words, he said, "I have worked to the extent of my strength and never willingly neglected anything which ought to be done. . . . There were great discouragements, few to lend a helping hand, and much prejudice to be met."

Mr. Babbitt exercised the closest possible personal supervision over every construction detail. He was firmly insistent that only the best possible materials be used, and that craftsmanship of the highest standard be employed. The incident of "stone versus brick," which is now a Parish legend, is indicative of his tenacity.

In the early stage of construction, during a temporary absence of the Rector, the building committee decided that Haverstraw brick might well serve as a substitute for the more costly cut stone specified in the plans. No verbatim report has been preserved of the Rector's remarks as he walked into the churchyard and beheld the huge stacks of brick before him. However, at a special meeting of the committee called for the

following day, Mr. Babbitt is reported to have tactfully delivered a dissertation on thirteenth century English Gothic architecture, which must have been very enlightening and convincing. The bricks were quickly returned, and the solid stone construction henceforth prevailed!

It was necessary for Mr. Babbitt to keep after his congregation constantly to encourage them not to lose sight of their goal. "The will to help," counseled Mr. Babbitt, "will usually overcome many an obstacle, which the unwilling claim to be sufficient excuse for not helping. Even when it costs, not only time, labor, self-denial, and that which so many find it so hard to part with — their money!"

Nine long years elapsed before the church was sufficiently finished for occupancy. Many of the townspeople, when passing the half-finished roofless walls and huge piles of uncut stone, derisively dubbed the project "Babbitt's Ruins."

"That it was and still is being finished by degrees," said Mr. Babbitt, in one of his sermons many years later, "has really been an advantage. Better and more beautiful ways of doing things have been thought of, which would not have been, if the building had been done all at once. . . . Often the result of building in a hurry and by contract, is a heavy debt on a structure that looks as if it might have been run in a mould . . . and not at all emblematic of the truth, durability and grandeur of a religion that came from heaven. Far better that it should grow gradually into beauty and majesty. . . . Also, the building does not appear so stiff and formal as some do which have had a set plan beforehand and followed it, without any deviation right through to an immediate completion.

"This is one reason why modern Gothic churches are so inferior to the old ones. It is not the way in which the old cathedrals were built. There are often different styles of architecture in the same buildings, because the work took so many years, that the first part was done when one style of architecture prevailed — the Saxon or Norman, for instance, and the rest

was done when some other (form) prevailed. There are many different styles called Gothic! The oldest part of St. Alban's Cathedral is built of bricks of the pattern made when England was under the old Roman Empire — the newest part was finished only a few years ago!"

On August 19, 1878, the outside walls were completed and the first Divine Services were held under a temporary canvas roof. On stormy Sundays, it was often necessary for the congregation to huddle together along the side aisles to keep dry. On one particular Sunday, just as the Rector began his sermon, his opening words were lost in the crescendo of a terrible cloudburst. The canvas was suddenly ripped open over his head! Although thoroughly drenched, he proceeded to deliver his sermon and at least his oratorical ardor remained dry. Into his discourse he interposed a few well chosen words advocating the immediate need for a more durable roof. It has been stated that he interpreted this drenching as a manifestation from the heavens, sanctioning a departure from his firm "pay-as-you-build" policy. A bank loan of three thousand dollars was speedily obtained and the church was securely and permanently roofed. The loan was repaid during the next three years, and is the only instance of indebtedness incurred during Mr. Babbitt's church building operations.

It seems highly improbable that a man of Mr. Babbitt's high intelligence would have attempted a task of such magnitude as the building of Grace Church without the aid of a set of drawn-to-scale working plans. It also seems reasonable to assume that such plans, following his own basic design, were drawn by some professional architect, either in New York or in England.

However, two men, who for years were closely affiliated with Mr. Babbitt's building operations, undoubtedly contributed much practical advice, as well as craftsmanship of the highest order to this work. These men were his head stonemason and his master mason. Both were very able men, who probably learned their trades in England. They apparently inherited the

traditional spirit of the ancient Guild of Cathedral Builders. Though neither of these gentlemen was of the Episcopal Church, Mr. Babbitt's relations with them were extremely cordial. A bond of fellowship was formed that was closely knit by a common interest in giving the very best each had to this project.

In a revealing thirty-fifth anniversary sermon, Mr. Babbitt writes of these men and his own method of working in this way:

"It is only just to say that much of the credit and economy of the work is due to the skill, intelligence, and honesty of the one who has done the stone cutting. I had but to tell him how a thing was to be done and he grasped it at once. If I had engaged him to do a thing by the day, I could go a hundred miles away and feel that he would give as honest a day's work as if I were looking at him all the time. The head mason and other workmen on the building worked faithfully, intelligently and well. It was a great help to have such workmen.

"It was one more reason for the success and beauty of the old cathedrals. The bishops and clergy who planned and built them, were not above receiving suggestions from their workmen. They did not have a cut-and-dried plan, and consequently everything did not look as if it had been made by machinery. Each building had a character all its own."

The original wooden church was incorporated into the new stone church. Its architectural lines and matching stone façade blended harmoniously with the larger one. This section was given over to the Sunday School, a part of Christian life which Franklin Babbitt felt most important. However, many of our elder churchmen today remember that in their youth their Rector advised them that if they were unable to attend both Sunday School and church — they should give their full allegiance to the church. He felt sermons carried a special message for young ears — and he prided himself upon their brevity. "No sermon should extend beyond fifteen or twenty minutes," said Mr. Babbitt. "The greatest message, conceived in the most articulate manner, can be lost in a lengthy delivery."

Beside his concise use of words, Mr. Babbitt consistently exhibited a thriftiness born of his New England background. His greatest example was the building of the main church. "This church, were it to be built under ordinary methods," he remarked, "would undoubtedly cost several times its present expenditure."

At one time, during a period of economic depression, it was necessary to paint the gutters and the roof. Many of his congregation were out of work, so he suggested to St. Andrew's Guild that he pay twenty-five cents an hour to each man who assisted him in this program. The response was tremendous! As the list of workers grew, Mr. Babbitt cancelled his waiting order at the paint store. Then, collecting fifty odd cans of various colored paints which had been allowed to accumulate about the property, he proceeded by use of a large vat to reduce the spectrum of color to an unpalatable but uniform mass. The job was done, the workers were paid, and "That," said Mr. Babbitt, "was that!"

On May 30, 1882, Grace Church was honored by another visit of Bishop Potter, who came to officiate at its consecration. Mr. Babbitt and his many devoted parishioners were joined by a vast number of visiting clergy and town and county officials. Before this large but solemn gathering, the venerable Bishop, now in his eightieth year, paid a fine and well deserved tribute to Mr. Babbitt, . . . "whose persistence, perseverance, personality, marked artistry and technical skill, has made possible this great and glorious occasion. . . ."

Joy unbounded must have risen within the Rector's heart at this moment. Few men live to see their dreams fulfilled. His prayers of thanksgiving must have echoed well within the walls of Heaven. But although this service of consecration acknowledged an architectural peak in the life of Grace Church, Mr. Babbitt realized its greater task was yet to be done. "Its spiritual work can never be completed while its walls stand," contemplated this wise man, "but will go on through succeeding generations until a far richer harvest will be gathered."

## IV. *Fruits of the Ministry*

In the early years of his Ministry, Mr. Babbitt had provided the Parish with a stone Rectory situated on the north corner of Franklin Street. It was a fine house of good architectural design, a comfortable dwelling surrounded by green lawns and shrubbery. A hedge of English hawthorne ran the length of the premises, and on the north side stood Norway spruce and arborvitae. Mr. Babbitt took pleasure in pruning his evergreens and working in his garden. The flowers on the south side of the house were very satisfactory and he took loving care of them. Whenever he had a spare hour he was engaged with a spade or shovel, clippers or trowel, pruning and perfecting what nature had produced for him. With a chuckle he recalled a passing remark that he took care of his garden as he did the souls committed to his charge.

He was certainly pruning and clipping his choir boys who totalled the staggering number of thirty-five at the latest count. They reminded him of his plants growing and sprouting in all directions, so he was forever busy pruning with a hard cane if need be, covering his genuine fondness for them with a stern countenance and steely blue eye which was hard put to hide the twinkle. His wife had chided him for his continuing preference of his choir boys and it had become a source of amusement between the two of them. She, strong-minded creature that she was, had organized the Girls' Friendly Society with the willing help of Miss Elizabeth Stillwell and all he had heard of late was girls and sewing lessons, and English lessons, and lessons in deportment. His wife with her ever ready sympathy had reached out to all sorts of girls and the Rectory hummed on winter afternoons with female chatter and bustle.

If it wasn't Emily's girls it was the newly formed Ladies' Guild, a group that never failed to astound him with the amount

of work they were able to accomplish. He had been fortunate to harness this capacity and the Ladies Guild was regularly supplying the House of the Good Shepherd in Maine with much-needed garments and supplies. The meetings of this guild were held in the evenings at the Rectory and the ensuing discussions were often lively and spirited. The conflict over evolution had caused a stir in the village and he had been stopped by parishioners and villagers alike to reopen the much discussed topic.

One particular morning was clear and cold and he was out early. It had snowed during the night and the light powdery snow lay heavy on the branches of the evergreens. His pleasure in the planting around the church was enormous. The spruces and hemlocks were full and graceful and the English yew was red with berries. From tree to tree he freed the branches from the snow and they sprang up dusting his face and shoulders with white flakes. This would be the third Christmas since the Bishop had consecrated the church, his twenty-fourth in the parish of Nyack. In the midst of his musing, he suddenly noticed that a good sized evergreen he had planted with his own hands was missing, and there was only a hacked stump in the snow. A slow mounting anger took possession of him at the sight of the desecration and he strongly suspected a certain person guilty of the vandalism. After a bit of private sleuthing and sharp cross questioning of particular characters, he called at the house of the suspect.

It was the day before Christmas and his deductions had been correct. There in the corner of a cold and cheerless room was his evergreen, propped against the wall. A feeble attempt had been made to transform it into a Christmas Tree with bits of string and colored paper. He was aware of three small children who hovered by the tree, their eyes intent upon him and uncertain of the unfamiliar visitor in clerical black. The room was very still, and after a pause he quietly questioned the father. The man admitted his guilt, and Mr. Babbitt soon learned he



THE FIRST GRACE CHURCH



was without work, without coal, without funds, and father to the motherless brood. Because of the circumstances, Franklin Babbitt left without delivering a well-deserved reprimand and on the same afternoon had sent to the house a huge basket containing effective trimmings for the lost tree, some toys and clothing, and enough food and staples to last for several days. He ordered a load of coal for the family, and as he later that evening confessed to his wife, had hired the jobless father to care for the trees and shrubbery on the church grounds. Some months later, Mrs. Babbitt beheld the happiness in her husband's eyes when they saw, replacing the stump of the stolen tree, a fine flourishing spruce planted by the grateful gardener.

His interest in his choir boys grew. He was always on the lookout for likely candidates in his Sunday School and was not above a bit of proselytizing regardless of which church the boy attended. The boys became young men and were replaced with similar lads, but they always remained his boys. His study door was open to them and their companions. He was their guide and friend, spiritual counsellor and priest. On Saturday afternoons he took them on hiking trips through the hills and organized a summer camp north of Rockland Lake which ran for many years. To further their education he gave willingly of his own funds. To Yale and Columbia College and to seminary he helped to send his young friends. No repayment was necessary — only that they give of themselves to whatever was set before them. He gave honestly of his own money. Squandering of money was a pastime he abhorred. He often admonished his congregation "that truly blessed and generous are those who give freely, if only they give what they can honestly afford."

His generosity extended beyond his boys and his congregation. There were times when poverty was severe in the village and he asked and received money and clothes from his close friends and more fortunate families. These were distributed among the needy. One year his running account at Tuttle's Shoe Store was high as he had an agreement with the proprietor to

provide a pair of shoes for all children of the village who were in need. Occasionally Mr. Babbitt's kindness was channeled into other directions. William Essex, the assistant at the time and later Bishop of Illinois, found his Rector one morning in a state of vexation in his study. The money he had provided to a family for the purchase of coal had been spent for a Victrola! On another occasion, his temper exceeded its limit. A mischievous choir boy placed on the organ pipes an evil smelling concoction so that when the organ was pumped the ensuing odor drove the choir and choir mistress from the stalls and out of the door of the church. Mr. Babbitt followed in hot pursuit and, upon catching the culprit, thoroughly trounced him in the center of the village.

A man of strong convictions, he preached simply and directly. He administered to the needs of the bodies and souls of his people. No man nor woman had fallen too low for his help. He firmly believed that Christ would be found among the outcasts of society. To a particular woman openly living in sin and freely plying her trade, he brought hope, a fresh start, and the means of grace. To the drunkard, to the hardened sinner, to the hopeless he brought comfort and the opportunity to redeem. His ministry grew and his influence reached into the lives of the people of Nyack.

Many of his sermons included observations he had gained from his travels abroad. Many of his vacations were spent in England and on three trips he visited Egypt and the Holy Land. He strongly advocated British colonial rule among the Moslems stating that the religion of Islam brought only poverty and degradation to the majority of its followers. He strongly decried any church which claimed to be infallible on earth. "If there is no possibility of error, there can be no hope of improvement," he was often heard to state.

He formed the St. Andrew's Guild and spoke often of how St. Andrew, when called by our Saviour, first found another and brought him also to Jesus. This he asked his congregation to do.

He was served by a reverent and loyal Altar Guild. A Parish Aid Society was founded and St. Agnes' Guild for older girls flourished. The younger children formed a sewing group and the boys' club grew in strength.

The choir under the able direction of Mrs. G. H. Picard, organist and choirmistress, became known as an outstanding musical group. Miss Cleveland had first helped Mr. Babbitt in establishing the choir and under Mrs. Picard the men and boys' choir excelled.

The Rector and his wife celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, both held in high regard by their people and justly proud of their record of growth of the Parish. It was a very joyous and happy celebration for both of them.

In 1892 the Rectory and the land adjacent to the church was sold and the present Rectory on First Avenue was purchased. The sale of the former Rectory was placed in the hands of a trusted friend of the Rectory. It is believed that Mr. Babbitt offered the house and land belonging to him for sale to raise money for a need in the church. Buying the present Rectory was an economical move as the money realized would cover the debt. We assume Mr. Babbitt understood clearly his former property would be purchased by a friend of the church. Unfortunately this was not so. The land was sold to representatives of the Roman Catholic hierarchy for the building of a house of worship. Unknown to Mr. Babbitt, this transaction took place, and he later learned this fact when, working in his garden, he was asked by a clerical stranger to leave the premises. The loss of the property and the method in which the sale took place was very distressing to him.

Two years later Mr. Babbitt suffered the death of his wife. Emily Tillou Babbitt had been his companion for twenty-nine years. Her help and source of strength to her husband cannot be estimated nor the sorrow which was laid upon him. Emily Babbitt died of pneumonia in 1894. Her deep interest and unceasing labor during the pioneer days of the church were of

immeasurable value. She was held in affection throughout the Parish.

Franklin Babbitt spent the following year abroad, mostly residing in England. His very capable assistant, the Reverend F. Greaves carried on the work of the Parish during this long absence. Two letters were received from Mr. Babbitt, tendering his resignation as Rector of Grace Church. The Vestry refused to accept the resignation and Franklin Babbitt resumed his duties on June 15, 1896.

## V. *The Lengthened Shadow*

The end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth found Mr. Babbitt continuing the busy life of a Parish Priest.

The town of Nyack had grown and changed since his arrival. It was no longer as Dutch in character nor as rural in atmosphere. The last of the shoe factories had closed its doors in 1900, but the new sewing machine factory of Willcox and Gibbs had opened. Organs were being built in South Nyack by M. A. Clark, who had originally come to Nyack to install the organ in Grace Church. Crushed-stone plants had to a large extent replaced the red and gray sandstone quarries. Some of the summer residents had become permanent Nyackers. Others had built summer residences and more and fancier hotels such as the Prospect House and the Ivanhoe had made the town a fashionable resort.

As Mr. Babbitt walked up Broadway from the Nyack Library which had been built in 1903 and past the Commercial Building which housed the Nyack National Bank, he was greeted by many persons. In his broad-brimmed hat and his clerical garments of black dulled to green, he had, over forty years, become a familiar sight to the townspeople. Going up the street he looked up with pleasure at the handsome square tower of Grace Church. It had been completed in 1902 and was the culmination of the beautiful Gothic church. The old church had been added to and made into a parish house, and now the workmen were busy on the gymnasium, which he wanted for his choirboys' recreation. (It was finished in 1910.)

One day, Mr. Babbitt was stopped by the pastor of one of the other local churches who told him to cease assisting a certain family of the latter's flock, on the grounds that the husband spent most of his time and funds in saloons. Mr. Babbitt informed his critical clerical colleague that he had no intention

of neglecting this family because the wife and children were in need of any comfort he could offer. It is reported that because of his efforts this particular man eventually became aware of his responsibilities and a respected member of the community.

On his walks he met many of his choirboys. Some who had been there at the beginning in 1882 were grown men. The present choirmaster, Henry Noll, had started as a choirboy. In 1907, Mr. Noll succeeded Mrs. Picard as organist and director. He was a musician, composer and director of great talent and a devoted churchman. Under his guidance, the Grace Church Choir attained an enviable reputation in the Diocese. Mr. Babbitt and Mr. Noll worked together in perfecting a service of musical beauty and low church simplicity. During this time a ceremonial Cross (in memory of Edward Merritt) was presented to the church. Mr. Babbitt relegated it to an out-of-the-way spot until shortly before his death when he began using it, explaining that since the next Rector would probably want it, the congregation might as well get used to it. Throughout his Rectorship the services were probably kept extremely simple. There was not even a Cross on the altar. After a certain Thanksgiving Day Service, a rather prim and pious member of the Altar Guild suggested to Mr. Babbitt that the altar decorations of dried corn, gourds and squash be devoutly buried. The practical, economical rector was horrified. "Let the sexton have them to feed his chickens," he said sternly.

Mr. Babbitt had very strong convictions and preferences on the subject of floral decorations of his church. He loved red; red geraniums and carnations especially. Every Easter Saturday, after the altar guild had decorated the church with carefully selected lillies and spring flowers, he would upset their arrangement by bringing in many, many small pots of red geraniums which he placed in rows around the chancel. These were afterwards distributed to the children. His taste in decorations was original but his feelings on ostentation were violent. After a

fashionable and flower-bedecked wedding he was heard to say that the place looked like a "damn swamp."

On the occasion of their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, the Babbitts were presented with a sterling silver vase. Some time after Mrs. Babbitt's death this vase was apparently stuck away in a back cupboard. When some of the Altar Guild members came to ask his opinion about suitable flower containers, he unthinkingly dug out the now tarnished and dusty vase. He was properly reprimanded for his lack of care and appreciation for their gift, but the members felt that they might as well take the vase and put it into use. As a matter of fact, it is still used on the altar every Easter — filled with red carnations, in loving memory of Mr. Babbitt.

On Friday, October 13, 1911, the golden jubilee of the Reverend Franklin Babbitt as Rector and founder of Grace Church was celebrated. About seven hundred persons gathered to pay tribute to the modest, ascetic-looking old man. During the day he had received congratulatory letters and telegrams from all parts of the world, including a personal letter from the then Prince of Wales and a cablegram from the Bishop of London. The evening program included four speeches. Bishop Burch and Bishop Green of the Diocese of New York, who had come out by train to Tarrytown and been brought across the river by a special trip of the ferryboat, *Rockland*, were the first to speak. Both paid high tribute to Mr. Babbitt's long service to the Episcopal Church and to Nyack. They were followed by the Reverend Sartell Prentice of the Reformed Church, who spoke in behalf of the Nyack clergy.

The final address was made by Justice A. S. Tompkins for all the people in the community. At the closing he presented the Rector with the sum of \$1,995.35 from the members of Grace Church and friends. Mr. Babbitt said that he was "surprised, amazed and overwhelmed" at the magnificence of the gift and hoped he was truly deserving of it.

After the fiftieth anniversary festivities, Mr. Babbitt returned

to his normal way of life which by now had made him a fixture of the community. He spent much of his time making pastoral calls, which he generally kept to a rigid formula of fifteen minutes at each home. Since Mrs. Babbitt's death, the Rectory was cared for by a housekeeper, Amelia Nelson. He personally, however, watched that everything was managed thrifitly. He abhorred waste in any form. Even his sermons were written on scraps, backs of envelopes, receipted bills and bits of stationery picked up from hotels and ocean liners. He obviously gave little thought to the possibility of preserving them for posterity. He restricted his meals to the simplest foods and was known to give up butter so that the poor could be helped by his economy.

As the years passed he became increasingly frail in appearance, but his mind and general health remained good. His correspondence was voluminous and became ever greater in 1917 when many of the young men who had grown up under his guidance went to war. He spent hours answering their letters and praying for their safe return.

In the fall of 1917, Mr. Babbitt at the age of 82, completed his 56th year as Rector of Grace Church. He had, by now, buried all his original parishioners; he had married their children and baptized their grandchildren. The Parish which he had created was now one of the principle parishes in the Diocese of New York. A bleak wartime winter was starting. In December, Nyack was buried under a sixteen inch snow blizzard. By January the river was so solidly frozen that hundreds of motorists drove across it. The cold was so intense that three local churches were unable to hold services on Sunday, January 6th. Grace Church remained open.

Late in the month Mr. Babbitt suffered a physical collapse. After a few days of rest in the Nyack Hospital, he insisted on being returned to his home, the Rectory. In his last hours, his behaviour followed the pattern of his life. Always a perfectionist, he lay in his bedroom while Mr. Noll and the choir sadly practiced the music that would soon be needed for his funeral.

Macabre though this seems to us, his choirboys understood that a perfect performance would be their final sign of respect for their beloved Rector. Franklin Babbitt had lived a life of carefully planned order, thrift and devoted service and he must have rested peacefully knowing he was leaving an icebox that was completely cleaned out and a funeral service that was sounding as it should.

Two days later, on Saturday, January 26, 1918, the mortal remains of Franklin Babbitt were carried from his beloved Church. It was a funeral which the *EVENING JOURNAL* called "the most remarkable ever seen in Nyack." Hundreds of persons crowded the church which was decorated as nearly as possible as it had been every Easter. The Reverend Dr. Peters, an old friend, conducted the service which was attended by clergymen of all denominations. Mr. Babbitt's casket, covered by his favorite bright red carnations, was carried down the aisle by five of his Vestrymen, while the choir sang his favorite anthem, "I Heard a Voice from Heaven."

After fifty-seven years of service to God, to several generations of parishioners and to the community of Nyack, Franklin Babbitt was leaving the church he had established and built.

*"Si monumentum requiris, circumspice."*



## VI. *The Reverend Albert Larrieu Longley*

The weeks that followed Mr. Babbitt's death left Grace Church Parish stunned. Every day for three weeks the Nyack EVENING JOURNAL carried in its Church Notices: "Grace Episcopal Church: Rev. Franklin Babbitt, Rector. Services 8 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 4 p.m. (During the summer, 7:45 p.m.)" as though unwilling to admit that the "grand old man of Nyack" was no longer with them.

The need for strong leadership was greater now than at any time since the beginning of Grace Church. America had been at war since April, 1917. For those left at home there were Heatless Holidays, gasless days, meatless and sweetless days. Influenza raged through the country — as ruthless a killer as mortal fire.

A succession of ministers supplied the 350-odd families of Grace Church. Among them were the Reverends David Bowen, Frank Jones, Edward Luke Reed, and Thomas Lossee. On April first there were three Easter services, but none on Ascension Day as there was no Rector available.

Summer slowly turned to fall, and finally in late October a tall, handsome, genial man came to Grace Church with his stately wife. His name was Albert Larrieu Longley.

To be willing to come to this foundering Parish, in the face of eleven months of supply rectors following fifty-seven years of loyalty to one other man — and in times as trying as the fall of 1918 — took courage. He had the necessary qualifications for the task.

Born in Troy, New York, in 1873, he had, by the time he was 26 years old, earned a Bachelor and a Master of Arts degree from St. Stephen's College, and a Bachelor of Divinity degree from General Theological Seminary in New York. He was ordained deacon in 1899, and Priest in 1900 by Bishop Doane.

His older brother was Bishop Coadjutor of Iowa. He himself had been made curate of St. Mary's Church in Burlington, New Jersey, and chaplain of St. Mary's Hall. In the same year he had married Mae LeRoy Brown of Waterford, New York.

In 1901 he became Rector of Trinity Church in Asbury Park, New Jersey, and four years later was called to Trinity Church, Bayonne, New Jersey. The thirteen years in Bayonne were interesting and productive ones for Mr. Longley. He was a member of the Board of Missions, a delegate to the Provincial Synod three different years. In 1909 he was a delegate to the Pan-Anglican Congress. He also wrote a history of Trinity Church, in addition to his pastoral duties in a fast-growing industrial town.

The first item that is found of the Reverend Mr. Longley's arrival in Nyack was a notice in the *EVENING JOURNAL* that the new Rector of Grace Church was conducting services on November 3, 1918. There was little fan-fare around his arrival, and perhaps this is understandable because four days later the report came that Germany had signed a peace treaty, that Alfred E. Smith had been elected the first Roman Catholic Governor of New York State, and that 89 out of every 100 New York women registered had exercised their brand new right to vote.

Then on November 11th came the glorious news: "**WAR AT END, ARMISTICE SIGNED AT 6 A.M., FIGHTING HAS CEASED.**" There was a second Peace Parade. In Nyack the following Sunday Mr. Longley and his war-weary parishioners celebrated Holy Communion in a Victory Thanksgiving Service — and no one doubted that this marked the end of The War to End War, especially since the peace terms were said to "make Germany powerless in the future."

Grace Church and particularly the men of the parish rallied behind the new Rector and as it grew in strength it grew in numbers also, for he was a determined man and a forceful preacher. He felt strongly that every member of the Church should contribute to its support.

The first winter of The Roaring Twenties was typical of the decade that followed. Everyone was caught up in the post-war enthusiasm for a better world and a gayer one. Grace Church Parish was no exception. They joined their fellow citizens of Nyack in the drive for a new \$75,000 Memorial Park and a Chamber of Commerce, and, with pride, inspected the new Summit Park Sanatorium for tuberculosis patients in nearby Pomona. At the Church, Mr. Longley presented to the Bishop the largest confirmation class to date. A new gymnasium floor was laid and basketball tournaments were in full swing: "Episcopal Church Routs Baptists"; "Presbyterians Victors in Close Match." St. Andrew's Guild gave a dance and when a hurricane blacked out the electricity candles were lighted and the dancing went on. There was a four-day and four-evening Bazaar. And on the St. Andrew's Guild annual boat excursions to Coney Island the Rector was one of the most enthusiastic passengers.

Yet these were but a few of the activities. Four services were held every Sunday; all the organizations started in Mr. Babbitt's time were meeting regularly — some of them weekly — and were working at their appointed tasks, as was the choir with Mr. Noll as their leader. Music was still, as it has always been, a most important part of Grace Church; in fact, at one Good Friday Service Mr. Longley sang the baritone solo in Stainer's **CRUCIFIXION!**

The week before Christmas in 1920 was bustling and busy. On Saturday there was a large wedding, which had been slightly delayed by trouble with the lighting. On Sunday the usual services were held, and on Monday, just before the noon whistle blew, the fire alarm sounded. Grace Church was on fire!

School children on their way home to lunch stood in groups and watched the heavy smoke pour out of the Church, and flames lick through the windows and doors of the Parish House. Few could see the men that swept the water away from the new gym floor, but most realized that their Sunday School and the Sunday School piano which had been bought with their own

pennies and nickels were burning. The fire was kept to one building, but most heartbreaking to the Parish was that the part burned had been the original Grace Church building.

Christmas festivities and celebrations were not curtailed; the regular services were held that week. The choir caroled at the home of every Vestryman and at Mr. Dalley's store, where he was still at work. The Christmas Tree was decorated in the gym, or Memorial Hall, as it had recently been renamed at the suggestion of the Rector in honor of those who had died in the World War. On the day after Christmas, 260 children of the Sunday School carried their red- and green-wrapped presents up the center aisle of the Church and laid them in the Manger, and then went on to Memorial Hall, where they revelled in Christmas gifts and games.

Mr. Longley was determined that he and his parishioners would start the New Year with courage and fortitude. So, deciding that the Church, in spite of its troubles, was not doing as much as it should for the young boys, he announced that there would be a new club for boys twelve years old and up. Twenty-one arrived for the first meeting and were quickly organized into a club that would tend to the business part with dispatch and get on to the meat of the meeting — basketball, chess, checkers, backgammon, etc. Before they met a second time the dread fire alarm screamed through the pre-dawn hours of January 18th. Grace Church was on fire!

There had been a basketball game and a dance Monday evening, and less than two hours after the young people had gone home, flames raced through the Sunday School again, this time finishing the destruction. The Church was saved again, and Memorial Hall, but the fire broke through into the pool room of St. Andrew's Guild, and through the roof as well. The Friendly Society, most of whom had been dancing all evening, came back and served coffee to the firemen.

Spirits were not as high after this second disaster. Meetings were cancelled; even choir rehearsal was called off. And true

to the old saying — “Black crows come in threes” — one more blow awaited. On February 10th, Henry Phillip Noll, choir-master, organist, teacher, died at the age of 47.

The Parish looked to its leader and found him still indomitable. A new choirmaster must be found immediately. Within a month Robert Grant Walker came to Grace Church from Staten Island.

Inspired by the faith and perseverance of Albert Longley, the Parish once more rallied. St. Andrew’s Guild pledged \$8,000 to rebuild the Parish House. Then one organization after another, looking toward a brighter future, pledged their efforts — to a new piano for the Sunday School; to remodelling the Rectory; to a memorial to Mr. Noll, the rebuilding and enlarging of the organ.

These were accomplished, and at the close of 1922, in the true spirit of the times — optimistic, gay, undaunted — St. Andrew’s gave a New Year’s Eve Ball. This was a celebration of triumph, and when Albert Longley received a call to another parish he accepted it, knowing that he, too, like the Parish he was leaving, must and could always move forward.

Mr. Longley served as Rector of St. Paul’s Church, Glen Cove, Long Island until his sudden death on April 24th, 1929, at the age of 56.





THE ALTAR



## VII. *The Reverend Stanley Brown-Serman*

In January, 1923, the Vestry started their search for the third Rector of Grace Church. Until he could be found the parish was served by the Reverend Ralph Pomeroy. One man particularly interested them, the son of a clergyman now serving at Zion Church in Dobbs Ferry, New York. His name was Stanley Brown-Serman.

His scholastic background was excellent. His own evaluation of himself and his scholarly achievements up to that time are found in the Columbia College Year Book of 1905:

I was born in Yorkshire, England, August 21, 1883, where I began to work off prep conditions in a kindergarten. At the age of six I came to Canada and two years later found me in the United States. From that time, I have lived in several parts of the country, preparing for college in the public schools and at home. The first two years of my course were spent at St. Stephen's College, which I left at the end of my sophomore year to join the Class of 1905 at Columbia. Upon graduation I shall enter the General Theological Seminary for a three years course and after that — who knows?

He was graduated with Honors, his undergraduate thesis being, *The Intellectual Life of St. Paul*. He did go on to General Theological Seminary, and in 1908 received both his Master's degree from Columbia and Bachelor of Divinity from the Seminary. That year he was ordained Deacon and later Priest by Bishop Greer, and while he served at the Chapel of the Atonement in New York, he was also made a Fellow at the Seminary. In this capacity he went to Keble College at Oxford, England, and for the following two years was at the same time curate of All Saint's Church, Brills, Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Brown-Serman returned to New York in 1912, where he was curate first at Christ Church and then at St. Thomas'.

Here he met Marion Mantagu Clarke. On January 5, 1915, they were married at St. George's Church in New York and proceeded immediately to Zion Church in Dobbs Ferry where he had recently accepted a call. This was their Parish and home for eight years.

In May of 1923, Mr. Brown-Serman accepted the call from Grace Church. He planned to bring his family to Nyack at the close of summer, which they spent at Raquette Lake in the Adirondacks. The Parish began preparations to welcome the quiet scholarly priest and his wife, and to prepare the Rectory for its very first young inhabitants — for in eight years the Brown-Serman family had grown, and now included Mary, Elizabeth, and Arthur. A large reception was planned.

The Parish, expecting to greet a Rector of cosmopolitan experience and tastes, and of quiet intellectual strength, was hardly prepared for the exhuberance of the young Brown-Sermans. Rarely has a rector been blessed with a more complementary wife. While he approached the church debt as one of his first most serious challenges, his wife decided that the young girls of Grace Church were being neglected. So with a working nucleus of her own two girls she started the St. Cecelia Choir with its high standards of hard work for musical and spiritual devotion to the Church.

Marion Brown-Serman literally "rode off in all directions"! Nyack has vivid memories of her riding side saddle with a group of youngsters over the fields and country lanes of Rockland County. She was an active and enthusiastic member of the Thursday Reading Class and the Nyack Garden Club. She drove the family car, family in tow, searching out antiques to refinish, some to place on consignment in a gift shop, some for the Rectory. For these excursions the patient Rector devised a bookshelf in the back of the car so he could enjoy her company, and at the same time pursue his intellectual interests.

For his inquiring mind was never at rest. He searched constantly for ways to add to the spiritual growth of his Parish,

and of himself, so that he could be a strong and firm guide. To this end he started several organizations: The Grace Guild, whose members sewed for City Missions; the La Madre Guild for young matrons; The Rector's Juniors for boys in their pre-teen years; The Little Helpers, whose duties centered around the Cradle Roll; The Choir Guild, who worked for the welfare and improvement of the choirs — for the first several years under the direction of Douglas Bailey. During Mr. Brown-Serman's tenure at Grace Church he taught liturgics at the New York School for Deaconesses.

Once a year he sent out a letter to all those whom he himself had prepared for confirmation asking them to come to a special Corporate Communion. He felt very strongly about the personal obligations of a Christian to the Church and frequently reminded his parishioners of these. In 1927 he arranged for a Parochial Mission for the week preceding Easter. This was conducted by part of The Church Army, consisting of over one thousand laymen who came from England at the invitation of the Bishops to the United States. This year they would start their crusade in Nyack. Mr. Brown-Serman felt that this was a rare privilege for Grace Church, and he adjured his Parish: "Give your time and your energies to the Mission. Work for it; pray for it. Accept and make no engagements beyond those which are absolutely necessary. Let us be courageous enough to put our pleasures aside. We of Grace Church need the awakening and deepening that this Mission will bring to our Parish if we — all of us together — keep it faithfully."

And still, Dr. A. T. Mollegen, of the Virginia Theological Seminary, wrote of him that his "piety was never touched by 'piosity.' He was humane, human, and humorous. Piety shone through his humanity without inhibiting or distorting it." "He had great respect for the dignity of man, awareness of his capabilities, but little tolerance for those who shirked their duties."

The Rector and his wife made a good team "each with strong

but diverse characteristics, balancing and reinforcing each other, and each with a love for all kinds of people." They took the St. Cecelia Choir on picnics, and parties, had them sing in the Bell Tower at dawn on Easter mornings, and started the annual trip to The Cathedral Church of St. John The Divine for the Mite Box Service. They were friends of the grocery man who peddled his vegetable cart down First Avenue. They held lavish New Year's Day receptions — to which not only the Parish but also their friends of all faiths from all over the country were invited.

In 1928, Mr. Brown-Serman prevailed on the *Entre Nous Société* to reinstitute a Parish newspaper. This time it was called the Grace Church *MESSENGER* — and in November, Volume I, Number 1, reached every home in the Parish. The front page contained an article describing The Loyalty Campaign, and the first of many published letters from the Rector. In this he said, in part, "I ask you therefore to pledge yourself to take part in the Church's life of worship and sacrament, to fill the empty pew, to be a Church member spiritually in earnest. I ask you where and when you can to give your strength and time to some active work in the Church. I ask you to bear a real, responsible, living witness to the life to which the Church calls us all. . . . Will you ask yourself whether the Church is not more important than a luxury or a pleasure? Will you not make your pledge of money the first step toward a more generous giving of yourself to the Church of Christ?"

The Parish responded and, although Pew Rentals still provided a fairly large proportion of the Church's income, the Parish debt was reduced from \$5,000 to \$1,000 and the Endowment Fund increased from \$1,500 to over \$21,000, supported by 450 families, slightly over 700 communicants. In the meantime, St. Andrew's Guild had paid off in five years the \$8,000 debt they had contracted for at the time of the fires in 1920.

The Grace Church *MESSENGER*, of course, contained a good deal more than financial news and the Annual Loyalty Campaign. Each issue told of the busyness of the growing church:

The Church School, the Choirs, The Vestry, and the dozen or so other organizations. There was a notice in one issue in which the Rector assured his readers that "the bent pipe in front of the Church is not a periscope from which the Rector anxiously watches for those who do not come to Church. It will soon support the notice board for the Church."

In April, 1929, Grace Church Parish learned that they were to have a new choirmaster, Albert E. Clark, who was to serve the Rector as well as Lay Assistant.

Mr. Brown-Serman, in 1928, had departed from the traditional late afternoon Christmas Eve service. Now the carols started at 10:45 p.m., the Holy Communion Service began at 11:30, and the Communions made as the first act of the day after the chimes had rung. With Mr. Clark at his side he was able to enlarge the music program again, to include The Festival of Lights, Stainer's CRUCIFIXION, Gaul's PASSION. In 1931 he announced that it had been so good to see families sitting together, especially at the Christmas Eve Service, that there would be a special Family Worship Service on March 8th. And in Holy Week of that year, "as an expression of Christian Fellowship," the congregations of the Reformed Church and Grace Church united for two services.

Finally, in December he wrote to his Parish, "Let us keep Christmas again in a truly Christian way. . . . When we have kept Christmas in the Church we shall find it still happier in the home. I have a special and personal reason for asking that you will all be in Grace Church this year. Christmas was the first of the Church's great Feasts that I spent with you all; it will be the last that I shall be able to spend with you. I want to carry away with me the memory of the most wonderful Christmas of them all."

For, a month earlier, Mr. Brown-Serman had tendered his resignation to the Vestry in order to accept the position of Professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Virginia Theological Seminary.

While this was an important mission in his church life, the training of young men who were to serve the Church in the future, it was not an easy break for the Parish he was leaving. The groundswell of the great Wall Street Crash, begun in 1929, was slowly reaching Nyack, and the Church income had already begun to drop alarmingly. However, the Reverend Arthur Judge had promised to come from New York to Grace Church until a new rector was found. Mr. Clark was still with them, and he had Mr. Ansbury as his assistant to work with the youngsters.

So the Parish, with mixed feelings, gathered together on New Year's Day for a farewell party for the Brown-Serman family.

For the next twenty years Mr. Brown-Serman remained at Virginia, where he was affectionately known as "Dr. B." The last two years before his retirement he served as Dean of the Seminary. The Honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by Virginia Theological Seminary, and of Doctor of Sacred Theology by General Theological Seminary. But life for "Dr. B." was not all honors. In 1942 his son, Arthur, was killed in Marine Air Corps maneuvers, and three years later his wife died of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

When he retired from Virginia in 1952 he went for a short time to Brazil as a special representative of the National Council of the Episcopal Church. On his return, though he was already seventy years old, and faced a prolonged illness, he sought again the academic life. At General Theological Seminary he studied and lectured on liturgics. He died at the home of his sister in Islip, Long Island, on March 11, 1955, survived by his daughters Mary (Mrs. Stephen Walke of Hagerstown, Maryland) and Elizabeth (Mrs. Colin MacRae of Alexandria, Virginia). He was buried in the cemetery at Virginia Theological Seminary.

*"The thread which united his rich endowments and achievements was personal devotion to our Lord."*

— DR. A. T. MOLLEGEN

## VIII. *The Reverend Ernest W. Churchill*

The depression came to Nyack, as it did to most small towns, a few years after it hit the big cities. By 1932, Nyack was feeling with full force the effects of what had started on Wall Street in 1929. Some businesses had closed, a few large river-front estates went begging for ten thousand dollars, and the wealthy men who had been accustomed to financing their churches were no longer able to do so.

Into this scene a young man was called to Grace Church as its fourth Rector. The Reverend Ernest W. Churchill arrived just two years after he had been ordained to the priesthood to start a memorable period of service that lasted thirteen and a half years. During this time Mr. Churchill's whole concept of Christianity was dramatically strengthened and the love which characterized his ministry has left its mark on many persons of Grace Church Parish.

Ernest Churchill was born in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1899, of American parents. He spent his early years in Buffalo. Throughout his childhood, he attended the Episcopal church and by his early 'teens he was a Sunday School teacher, treasurer of the Sunday School, and president of the Young People's Society.

After the death of his father, when he was fourteen, he assumed the responsibilities as the eldest of the four children. He attended the Buffalo Technical High School and worked for the General Electric Company. At twenty, he moved to a better job at Syracuse, where he plunged into many activities at All Saints Church, including becoming a licensed lay reader.

All the while he was working for a living, an inner conviction of his true calling was growing. At the time, lack of education and funds seemed an insurmountable obstacle, but his absolute faith in God's will sustained him until a way opened.

The new college-seminary plan offered by Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, and the Seabury Divinity School in Faribault admitted him on probation. He succeeded in his studies, and was graduated in 1928 from Carleton, and from the Seabury Divinity School in 1930.

He had been ordained Deacon by Bishop MacElwain while in Seminary. He was ordained to the priesthood on St. John the Baptist Day, June 24, 1930, by Bishop Edward Coley at All Saints Church in Syracuse.

Mr. Churchill's first ministry was to two missions near Binghamton, New York. He threw himself into this work with the zeal characteristic of him. In August, 1931, he was married in Minnesota to Ruth Irene Bardwell, whom he had met during seminary days and whose warm friendliness and sense of humor were well suited to the difficult job of a minister's wife.

In April, 1932, Mr. Churchill accepted the call to Grace Church. It was a difficult change to become the Rector of a bigger parish in a larger community and to move into a vast bare Rectory for which they had only a few pieces of furniture. The country was in the throes of depression and the Church had little income, but Ernest Churchill was a courageous yet gently able priest who had known hard work before. He had followed God's will and by diligence and struggle he already was started on the road he was to follow all his life — not the easy way, but always the patient, humble, and thoughtful way.

In his first letter to the *MESSENGER* he keynoted his prime aim: "To try to make God a greater power in each one of your lives. . . . You need the church. . . . But the church also needs you." He wanted total participation by the Parish.

One of his first undertaking was to change the old system by which the Vestry annually re-elected themselves at a noon meeting. He instituted a new evening meeting at which Vestrymen were elected by a majority vote of the church members. The first Everymember Canvass in the parish brought in money from more people and for the first time the missionary quota was filled.

In June, 1933, the first baby was born to a rector while in office at Grace Church. She was Nancy Ruth Churchill. It was even suggested that Grace should be her name. Two years later a son, William Bardwell, was added to the Churchill family.

Mrs. Churchill was an ever-helpful wife and a leader in parish activities. She was a gifted musician and at her instigation women were, for the first time, made a part of the Grace Church Choir. Under her leadership the Women's Auxiliary flourished and an interest in mission work was regenerated.

Mr. Churchill was then, and has always been, deeply concerned with the church's place in the community. In 1934, he organized the first Union Lenten services of seven Nyack Protestant Churches. The various congregations were unused to mixing. Their differences were marked. The Episcopal church was then the only one of the seven to have a Cross in or on it. Now they all do. The Union Thanksgiving Service followed, and then a Baccalaureate Service at the High School with all the clergy, including the Roman Catholic, participating.

In October, 1934, the vestibule, financed by St. Andrew's Guild, and many memorials, were added to the church. There was much argument about destroying the architectural beauty of the building and encasing two of the Apostles (columns), but in the end Mr. Churchill's plea for the practical won out. The new vestibule cut the drafts from the opening doors and provided a waiting place and privacy for wedding parties and funerals.

In the fall of 1935, Mr. Clark resigned as choirmaster and lay reader, leaving a large gap in the church program. Deaconess Clara Searle, an experienced and consecrated worker, came to assist the Rector in the Sunday School and in visiting work. At the same time, Mr. Victor Powell took over the position of choirmaster and organist. The music of Grace Church has always been one of its most inspiring aspects and Mr. Powell brought a rich background and talent to the new work which enhanced the worship for many years.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of Grace

Church came in 1936. The year started off glowingly with the installation of an amplification system for the organ chimes. On Christmas Eve, just before the New Year, the sound of carols had been chimed out from four loudspeakers in the tower. From then on, every Sunday they were played for ten minutes before the eleven o'clock service.

The plans for the October celebration were being formulated throughout the year. Suddenly during a summer night's thunder-storm, lightning struck the cross from its pinnacle above the Rose Window, with a deafening crash. The almost six foot Cross was fragmented on the ground below. It was a sad and rather terrifying blow to the parish. People could not help wondering what interpretation to put upon this catastrophe. Was God indicating displeasure? Or was it a challenge to go forward? Mr. Churchill said "We shall expect a new Cross. . . . A Cross which shall go before us into the next 75 years." The anniversary was not daunted and a new Cross was erected, and dedicated by Bishop Manning. The foundation stone was the cornerstone from the old Rectory of Grace Church, bearing the date 1864 — an old foundation for the new. It was given back by St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church, which had bought and recently demolished the old Rectory. Behind the stone was placed a sealed box containing memorabilia of the past and the present.

As the 1930s drew to a close the rest of the world was plunging into war. In Grace Church, the confirmation classes were large and the Sunday School still growing; the 1939 Christmas services had a larger attendance than ever before. But, in Mr. Churchill's own words, there was a spiritual lack everywhere. When the fearful news of Pearl Harbor came on Sunday afternoon, December 7, 1941, the church was opened and it was soon filled with people saying their prayers. After that, the doors were opened daily and noon services were conducted by either the Rector or various laymen. Each issue of the *MESSENGER* carried the names of the men of the Parish who had gone to war.

By 1943, there were stars beside some of the names indicating missing in action, prisoner of war, or killed and the Rector was anxious to have a chapel where people could come to pray for their loved ones and for peace. Financed by gifts and memorials, and executed to blend with the interior of the church, The Peace of God Chapel was consecrated on Sunday, December 10, 1944.

These were disheartening years for everyone, but Mr. Churchill was feeling a stronger calling than he had ever known before. The difference between a church person and a Christian stirred him, and an ever growing desire to do God's will drove him relentlessly. The Oxford Group movement, from which the Alcoholics Anonymous group got its start, inspired him with a means to give greater spiritual help to his parishioners. The process of witnessing changed the lives of many and raised them to a new spiritual level. The movement had many critics, but gradually more and more clergy and laymen of the community became interested. For Mr. Churchill, his concern for people developed into a deep love. During his hospital visits he became increasingly absorbed with helping the sick, and then the mentally sick at Rockland State Hospital. He took courses in mental health care and in 1944 he took over "temporarily" the job of Protestant Chaplain at Rockland State. This work, added to his heavy pastoral duties, made a secretary necessary. Mr. Churchill persuaded Mrs. Virginia Osborn to help him out. This was the beginning of her years of loyal and devoted services to the succeeding Rectors at Grace Church.

In 1945, all was going smoothly for Ernest Churchill and Grace Church, but in this time of calm, the Holy Spirit started to make him restless. This restlessness intensified as Mr. Churchill waited to discover the Lord's will. An opening as Associate Rector of Calvary Church, New York, and the responsibility for a clergy school for deacons seemed to be the answer. In September, 1945, the Churchills left Nyack after a farewell reception combined with a welcoming party for their successors,

Mr. and Mrs. Claxton Monro, who were coming from Calvary Church to Grace Church.

Mr. Churchill spent two years in New York but continued to commute to Rockland State Hospital. Finally the divided time and responsibilities, Bishop Gilbert's urgings, and continuous praying convinced him that his work with the mentally ill was God's purpose for him.

In September, 1947, he moved out to Pearl River to take charge of the mission church of St. Stephen's and to continue as hospital Chaplain. The next eleven years brought St. Stephen's from a little mission to a full fledged parish and the Sunday School from 25 to 200. For a time after 1954, he gave up his hospital work to devote his full time to his parish. For Mr. Churchill these were years of pastoral success and some personal sadnesses. His beloved daughter, Nancy, was tragically killed, and twice his own health was endangered by attacks of tuberculosis.

Since 1959, Mr. Churchill has again turned his love, his energies, and his entire time to the patients at The Rockland State Hospital. In this great work, he is fulfilling with dedication his calling to do Christ's work on earth.

## IX. *The Reverend Claxton Monro*

“Hundreds Hear Young American Minister Speak On Lay Witnessing — New Vision, Ancient Power” — so read the headlines in England, Wales, Scotland, Bermuda, and Ireland, giving international acclaim to the Reverend Claxton Monro, fifth Rector of Grace Church.

“The Christian Church,” says Mr. Monro, “stands on the threshold of a spiritual revolution — an upheaval in doctrine, discipline and worship comparable to that which took place during the Reformation.

“I believe the witnessing fellowship of Christian laymen is destined to become in the decades ahead the new center of vitality, power, and authority in the church. The gulf which now exists between the pulpit and the people can be successfully bridged only by having a witnessing fellowship among the laymen.”

This burning conviction of Claxton Monro has burgeoned to great heights since he left Grace Church in 1950. Yet many developments in the Parish today were initially inspired by this original thinking of Mr. Monro.

Physically speaking, Mr. Monro’s greatest contribution to Grace Church was perhaps his tremendous endeavor in organizing and carrying out the Reconstruction Project for Rebuilding the Parish House. It proved to be a \$150,000 production, twice the expenditure for the church proper eighty-four years earlier. Spiritually speaking, however, the Reverend Claxton Monro accomplished even more.

A challenging and forceful speaker, Grace Church selected Mr. Monro after hearing him talk just once, as guest preacher in the Church pulpit. In the words of one parishioner, “Claxton was keen and fresh and the subjects of his sermons were always timely. He was emotional, impromptu, erratic. He had a

spontaneity which came from the depths of his soul. He had the ability to communicate his fiery beliefs to his congregation. At times he reached a pinnacle seldom heard in this day."

Besides being a great speaker, Mr. Monro is both a crusader and an organizer. These facets of his personality stem naturally from his background, education, and experience.

Born May 7, 1914, in Andover, Massachusetts, he was the second of three sons of Frances and Claxton Monro. He was a product of public school education for the most part, which he experienced in Burlington, Vermont, and Maynard, Massachusetts, during his elementary years. In 1931, he was graduated from Punchard High School in Andover, and a year later from Phillips Academy, Andover. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering and Business Administration four years later at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was a member of Tau Beta Pi, an Honorary Engineering Society.

Mr. Monro was baptized by his grandfather, an Episcopal Rector. He was brought up in the Episcopal Church and confirmed at the age of twelve in Andover. However, as he progressed through school, he found his personal faith gradually slipping away. For ten years he plunged into extreme agnosticism. He characterized his spiritual life by saying, "If there is a God, He has nothing to do with me." During this time, he went to work in the Market Research Division of J. Walter Thompson, a Madison Avenue Advertising agency in New York City, where he had a most promising business career.

But success brought him little happiness and less peace of mind. One night he wandered into a discussion group at the famous Calvary Episcopal Church in New York City, then pastored by the eminent Dr. Samuel M. Shoemaker. Claxton Monro was prepared to ridicule this fellowship of personal testimony. However, his pseudo-sophistication began to crumble as the elements of truth in this discussion penetrated his thinking. He returned again and again to subsequent meetings, not understanding why, but somehow compelled to do so. Finally, he

accepted the challenge, and committed himself to Christ experimentally. Two years later, he responded to what he believed was God's call for him. He left the world of business and entered the General Theological Seminary, with the fervent desire to become a priest. With this step his experimental commitment became a surrender for life.

In November, 1943, he was ordained deacon by Bishop Manning. Dr. Shoemaker, impressed with the zeal and fire of this young seminary graduate, made him his assistant at Calvary Church; and in February, he became a priest at an Ordination performed by Bishop Gilbert in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

It was while Mr. Monro was at Calvary that he met Victoria Booth Demarest. "Vickie herself," says Dr. Shoemaker in a recent letter to Grace Church, "was a remarkable instance of that unity of a deep evangelical experience with a strong church experience. She was the great-granddaughter of General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army; and she had for many years attended a very 'high-church' Episcopal school. It was the coming together of these two strains, as well as her native Booth-descended gifts which have helped make her the remarkable wife she has been to Claxton Monro." Victoria Demarest and Claxton Monro were married in Calvary Church on December 4, 1943.

During Mr. Monro's association with Calvary Church, he came to sense the importance of lay witnessing in the fellowship of the Church. And while he remained an enthusiastic advocate of this thinking, he was anxious to shepherd a parish of his own. The call to Grace Church in June, 1945, came as an answer to his ardent prayers.

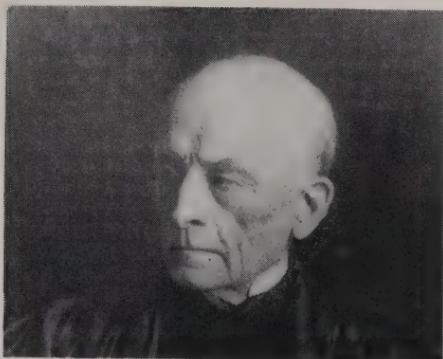
As Rector of Grace Church, Claxton Monro's work spread far beyond the pulpit. He felt that God should touch every avenue of his parishioners' daily living. He wanted their family, social, and spiritual lives to find equal oases in the church. In the October, 1945, issue of *The MESSENGER*, Mr. Monro

wrote, "If we are to be a real family we should keep in touch with one another;" and an obsolescent Parish House with antique facilities was no place to accomplish this.

Thus, shortly after being instituted as Rector by the Right Reverend S. Harrington Little on October 28, 1945, Claxton Monro began to lay the groundwork for his far-reaching Reconstruction Project. Participation being the keynote to family living, he wanted a large, modern kitchen where church suppers could be easily managed; a renovated gym with a new floor for parties and dances, as well as cub and scout maneuvers; new robing and rehearsal rooms for the church choirs; a kindergarten room; and a moving picture projection room for the Sunday School. Mr. Monro added, "If we are to be a Christian family, we should let our conversations show how God in his goodness has helped us to live our daily lives." To provide a place for these conversations, he redecorated and refurnished the East Room, where all church groups might grow in their spiritual stature on an informal basis.

Mr. Monro's background of business administration and engineering stood him in good stead as he planned this substantial reconstruction project. With his Vestry's approval, he hired a fine member-architect to draw up the blueprints. He then launched a Fund Raising Campaign to extend over a two and one-half year period, designed to solicit through pledging, the necessary funds for completion. Many remember the giant wooden thermometer at the church entrance, as well as the small printed ones on the pages of *MESSENGER*, which kept the Parish informed of the financial progress of this campaign. Mr. Monro issued a brochure as well which detailed the future plans for building.

There was a great deal of volunteer work on the part of the parishioners in the form of manual labor. The men of St. Andrew's Guild dug up the floor of Memorial Hall in preparation for the new cement one which was to be laid by the building



FRANKLIN BABBITT



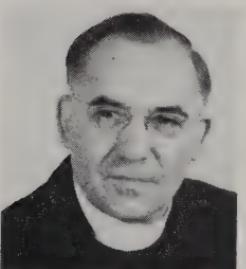
ALBERT LARRIEU LONGLEY



CLAXTON MONRO



STANLEY BROWN-SERMAN



HAROLD B. THELIN



ERNEST W. CHURCHILL



GEORGE F. REGAS



contractors. Laymen also painted walls and did the small carpentry within their ability.

For Mr. Monro endeavored to follow the founding Rector's policy of never deviating from the "pay-as-you-go" plan. In the November, 1946, *MESSENGER*, he remarked "that in the new Reconstruction of the Parish House, we will follow the precedent set by the late Reverend Franklin Babbitt whose firm policy it was to build only as the Lord provided the funds necessary to go ahead. . . . We shall incur no debts."

Many of the money-making programs, such as the Musical Arts Club production of "The Merry Widow," gave their proceeds to the Parish Reconstruction Fund. Mr. Monro also had the first photographs of Grace Church made up into postcards, which were sold about town and the nickels and dimes from these small sales gradually helped to swell the income.

Along with the physical-building program, the Rector continued to build spiritually as well. He believed that one reaches God primarily through fellowship. "One does not isolate an individual and work with him alone," said the Reverend Monro. "As in the early church, he must be brought into union with his fellow man."

During the five years of his rectorship at Grace Church, Claxton Monro had twenty such organizations actively participating in this fellowship. The groups he organized were not always limited to Episcopalians. He believed the essence of Christianity was ecumenical.

For this conviction, Mr. Monro worked diligently along with the other members of the Nyack clergy in the formation of the Youth Union, an interdenominational group of young high school students. The services were conducted entirely by the young people, but Mr. Monro and the other clergy cooperated by inviting the greatest inspirational speakers they could find to form the heart of each program. In their testimonies to God, Samuel Shoemaker, Doctor of Divinity and graduate of Princeton University, spoke with authority and dignity, as did Mr. Ralston

Young, Redcap No. 42 of Grand Central Station. Hundreds of young people flocked to these services; on many occasions there was standing room only.

Another such interdenominational group was the Canterbury Club. This group was organized by Mr. Monro primarily for young married couples. They met monthly in the newly converted East Room. It was a social group designed on a Christian premise. Their creed read in part, "We believe that giving of ourselves, our time, our strength, and our ability should be part of the expression of our Christian Faith."

The Canterbury Club did many things. They held auctions whose proceeds they donated to Grace Church; they refurbished toys and games each Christmas for the children of Rockland State Hospital; they once celebrated the Lenten season by holding "A Marriage Counsel," a series of lectures and discussions provided as guidance for young people contemplating marriage; they participated in the "Save the Children Foundation," the Chester Bowles program which was an outgrowth of the Second World War. But perhaps their greatest demonstration of Christian faith occurred when Mr. Monro asked them to sponsor a Displaced Family from overseas, in accordance with the request of the Church World Service of America. The Episcopal Church had as its share of Displaced Persons twelve hundred families to settle, and as yet the Ramapo Convocation had failed to fulfill any of its commitments. In his youthful zeal and enthusiasm, Claxton Monro turned to the Canterbury Club and found it eager to respond to his request. Two members personally signed the legal document which made them wholly responsible financially for a Russian refugee family then living in Germany.

When this family of five arrived in Nyack on June 6, 1950, the Canterbury Club had already rented and furnished a four-room apartment in West Nyack. The closets were filled with complete wardrobes for the parents as well as their three young children. And Mr. Tarasenko had the prospects of a full time job at Robert Gair Co., Inc. Within a very few months, this family

— who to return to their native land from Germany would have meant certain death — was completely self-supporting in the county of Rockland of these United States; and the corporate members of Grace Church, with Claxton Monro as their steward, were wholly responsible for it.

Mr. Monro was a crusader in the area of social ills and injustices. He often stirred up public opinion in the community if he felt it was warranted. One such occasion occurred when he brought pressure to bear on the local Y.M.C.A. to admit Negroes to their organization. Great controversy ensued, but, consequently, a truly representative association resulted.

When sorely needed scout masters were not forthcoming from his congregation, Mr. Monro advertised in the Rockland County *JOURNAL-NEWS*. His unprecedeted approach not only bore fruit, but in the process he plucked a ripe Congregationalist who has since become a pillar of Grace Church.

In September, 1947, Claxton Monro convinced the Parish of the importance of granting permission to the local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous to hold their meetings at Grace Church. He felt the sixty-five thousand reclaimed alcoholics throughout the world were a truly Christian example of God's word transforming men's lives.

Much could be written about the activities planned for the young people of Grace Church by both Mr. and Mrs. Monro. The Alpha Omega Society for high school students and a Junior Unit (for girls aged twelve to fourteen) of the Friendly Society came into being. Mr. and Mrs. Monro participated either as chaperones or as fellow members in these organizations. They planned hay rides and square dances as well as educational programs for St. Michael's Guild. Victoria Monro was energetic and enthusiastic in all these endeavors. She had an innate intelligence leavened with a rare artistic ability. She had a keen sense of humor, and both she and Mr. Monro enjoyed a good time. They cooperated extensively with the Teen-Age Canteen, a new group formed to work closely with the authorities of Rockland State

Hospital in helping the youngsters there with their recreational program. The Teen-Age Canteen planned many a dance for the Behavior Group at this hospital. Mrs. Monro's effervescent personality was an ever-present help and inspiration to these Parish fellowship groups.

The Rectory was always open — a haven to those in need. The coffee pot was perking in the kitchen almost twenty-four hours a day, where many received sustenance. This was a harbor for spiritual as well as physical fulfillment. Many problems were solved over a cup of coffee in the Rectory kitchen and quite often it entailed a good bit more than a hot meal and friendly counsel. If a home were needed it could be found in the Rectory amid the generous hospitality of the Monros. In this atmosphere of complete selflessness, Mrs. Monro bore three children; Victoria Frances, Mary Sutten, and David Claxton.

Within six months after Mrs. Monro's arrival in Grace Church, she had recruited twenty-four boys for the diminishing Boys' Choir. As was the duty of the Rector's wife before her, she also trained the girls of St. Cecilia's Choir.

When Victor Powell resigned in 1947, a new choir director and organist, Mr. Robert B. Lee, was hired by Mr. Monro. He worked enthusiastically with the Monros, and many musical programs emerged which extended far beyond the Sunday morning services. There were Annual Music Festivals of the combined church choirs, in which St. Cecilia's took an active part. Mrs. Monro gave her services to the very successful adult productions of the Musical Arts Club, an interdenominational group revived by her and Mr. Monro. When Mr. Lee received his Bachelor of Divinity from the Union Theological Seminary in 1949, he left his able assistant, Mr. Kenneth Seipp, as full time choir director and organist.

Claxton Monro, as other Rectors before him, did not overlook the importance of the Sunday School. A kindergarten room had been one of the first requirements of his Reconstruction Program. Victoria Monro, with her usual artistic flair, hand-

painted Noah's Ark and a handsome array of animals marching two-by-two around the nursery walls. At the south end of the room, Mr. Monro placed the original wooden altar which was made for the late Mr. Babbitt and used in his temporary church. Upon the face of it, Mrs. Carlton Reed painted a scene of the nativity. Here, before this original Grace Church Altar, the "littlest" parishioners opened their Service every Sunday.

To stimulate the further interest of his young people, Claxton Monro introduced attendance awards for the entire Sunday School membership. He also revised the Sunday School program to include visual education. Realizing the power of motion pictures upon the young mind, he arranged with Cathedral Films, Inc., to receive Biblical pictures for various age groups. During the week, he wrote the Sunday School lessons himself, centering them about the particular film to be shown, and adding stimulating questions and comments which he hoped would produce lively discussions among the alert and formative minds. The visual education program was very well received and the Sunday School classes flourished.

This growth in religious education, within the Sunday School program, which enrolled one hundred and eighty-nine children in 1949, was warmly acknowledged by the Rector: "We are grateful for the growing awareness among many parents that even the best Sunday School should not be expected to provide the total religious education for our children, but must be supplemented with religious observances and teachings at home."

Religion was certainly not a garment to be worn only on Sunday. It required habitual, daily wear if a living, working religion was to result. Perhaps one of Mr. Monro's disappointments in his years with Grace Church was in not being able to realize his desire for a parochial school. He felt the strength and power of daily religious education should not be overlooked. While his idea met with much interest, there was not sufficient support to make his dream a reality.

Mr. Monro extended his program of movies beyond the

Sunday School. Not being satisfied with the content of the films shown by the local movie house, Mr. Monro persuaded the Vestry to let him try Saturday morning movies. These were shown in Memorial Hall, and young children, regardless of their religious affiliations, were invited. "*Captain Fury*," "*Peck's Bad Boy*" and "*The Count of Monte Cristo*" were among the films shown. Each Saturday, after the picture, there followed a ten minute discussion of moral and spiritual issues raised by the story. "All the children in the community are invited," said Mr. Monro, "with the understanding that they will go to Sunday School somewhere in the community the following day."

Mr. Monro felt it extremely important constantly to reaffirm the Confirmation pledge: "My bounden duty is to follow Christ and worship God every Sunday in his church. . . ." Mr. Monro tried to make Sunday worship feasible in every way. To enable the parents of very young children to attend church he introduced a nursery and pre-kindergarten group at both the 9:30 and 11 o'clock services. He also introduced the coffee hour — a few moments of fellowship every Sunday after the eleven o'clock service. This innovation took hold and is now an integral part of Sunday morning activities.

In September, 1948, Mr. Monro founded the Associate Vestry, composed entirely of young men of the Parish. This was a means for broadening the representation of the Vestry, as well as a training ground for its future members. Also, in an effort to expand this very important governing body of the church, Mr. Monro increased the Rotation of the Vestry. By this arrangement, a vestryman at the expiration of his term could not be re-elected for a period of two years. This insured a constant flow of fresh thinking and new ideas into the church.

The basis of Claxton Monro's lay witnessing crystallized in Grace Church during the period of his rectorship. From the *MESSENGER*, February, 1946, Mr. Monro says, "The church is failing to reach the community; the only answer is for laymen

to take up the opportunity to pass on the light of their faith. . . . Only so shall we find our salvation."

He developed a corps of Lay Readers, six to eight men who were especially trained at the Seabury House in Greenwich, Connecticut. Mr. Monro felt that in many instances a lay reader would better communicate the word of God to another lay person than could the men of the cloth. One of this group subsequently became an ordained Priest of the church, due in no small measure to the influence Mr. Monro had upon his life.

In similar light, Mr. Monro devised a plan known as "Two by Two Visitation," wherein two lay members of Grace Church called upon parishioners during Sunday afternoons. These visits were for purely spiritual purposes, "not this time to raise money, but rather to know one another better; to become in the deepest sense of the word a Parish Family."

Dr. Nathan M. Pusey, famous educator and President of Harvard University said, "It is leadership in religious knowledge, and even more, *religious experience*, of which we now have a most gaping need." And it is that "religious experience" through personal testimony that Mr. Monro has been trying to convey ever since he gave his life to Christ at Calvary Church, almost two decades ago. He began this effort at Grace Church, as further shown in his statement from the February, 1946, *MESSENGER*: "The Rector has set aside Thursday evenings at 8:15 as a time of prayer and Christian fellowship for those who are interested in personal evangelism. In a world where religion is so far removed from the daily lives of so many people, there seems to be an urgent need for an informal fellowship where they can learn how the Christian faith can be put into practice on an everyday basis." And again in the June, 1948, *MESSENGER*: "One of the secrets of the power of the Christian faith is the fact that it increases as we pass it on to others. There is a Divine Economy by which our faith grows as we help others to find what God has so generously showered upon us."

Now at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas,

where he has been Rector since 1950, Mr. Monro is successfully at work deepening and broadening this *Witnessing Fellowship of Need* which is echoing far beyond the borders of both his state and his country. Of this Witnessing Fellowship, Mr. Monro says, "I am aware of more lives being changed through this group than have been changed through all the sermons I have preached over the last ten years. . . . If this Fellowship is made to work by our prayerful efforts, it can exist in every church regardless of denomination."

About him, Dr. Shoemaker writes, "Claxton Monro has had and is continuing an experience which the church greatly needs to know about, and from which many more sparks will be struck."

Claxton Monro is a man of great vision, and one of the truly dedicated men of our times. The five years at Grace Church, he says, helped him to find his true ministry. The congregation's willingness to experiment in many areas helped him to find a greater effectiveness in later years. Not too many members of the Parish took advantage of his personal witnessing invitation; yet for those who did, their lives were transformed. Perhaps the only true criterion of a priest should be his power for bringing the love of God into a real, working and controlling principle to those entrusted to his care. If this is so, then Claxton Monro was to Grace Church, and will be to everyone who comes in contact with him, a true disciple of the stewardship of God.

## X. *The Reverend Harold B. Thelin*

In the late summer of 1950, an Episcopal priest took in his hands and heart the Parish of Grace Church, Nyack. There was work to be done, and this man had a deep sense of the challenge and opportunity that lay before him. He came at the end of one era and the beginning of a new period of change and development involving Nyack and the whole of Rockland County.

The village of Nyack, now numbering ten thousand people, had climbed up and over the hills and lay sprawled along the river bank. From the hospital, the high school, the business center, the developments, the merchants, the professional people, the commuters would come his congregation. To the north and west of Nyack the large fields and tracts of land had been sold to speculators, and the great housing developments had sprung up. Families new to the community were moving out from the city. The outside world was moving in with relentless pressure, bringing new problems and new responsibilities and new visions. A bridge across the Tappan Zee was to be built linking the quiet village to busy intersections and giving easy accessibility to distant points.

There was work to be done, and the ground was ready for the plough.

The Reverend Harold Benjamin Thelin, the sixth Rector, came to Grace Church armed with a deep and abiding faith, a personal commitment of service and devotion to God and to the flock committed to his charge. A Canadian by birth and an Anglican, he set to work with the energy, tenacity of purpose, and mature strength so characteristic of him. These qualities combined with gentleness, good humor, a sharp sense of the ridiculous, and a mild irony rounded the personality of this very human and warm-hearted clergyman.

Here indeed was a man of many talents. Having inherited

from the Reverend Claxton Monro the Reconstruction Program, he had the task of completing the projects involved. While Mr. Thelin was Rector, the Church plant was enlarged to include a new chapel, and the Sunday School grew so fast that complete renovation of the Parish House and church buildings was necessary to house the children from pre-kindergarten through high school. This was a man practical enough to have his church school taught in the kitchen, in the house across the street, in a borrowed church, rather than have the sessions interrupted while the construction was in progress. This was a man who expected the seemingly impossible of his parishioners, who were in turn often astonished when the impossible was accomplished. "Pray" was his password. He was a man who gave of himself and his substance. "Give," he exhorted. He was a good priest to his people, comfortable and faithful in their troubles, rejoicing in their happiness. A man of deep personal charity, of kindness and patience, he alternately scolded and praised but always blessed his congregation. He was a man who stood close in the shadow of God.

Harold Thelin was born in Nelson, British Columbia, on July 24, 1904. He was the oldest son of several children born to Emma Boettger and John Conrad Thelin. Built high on the mountainside, overlooking both lake and river, the town of Nelson had seen the days of the Gold Rush to the Klondike; and the products of the mining and farming regions of the Kootenay district were traded in its markets. As a boy he attended the Anglican church, serving both as choir boy and sexton during World War I, when man-power was at a premium. He was influenced and guided through a close and warm relationship with his Rector, the Venerable Fred N. Graham, whom he was to see again, thirty-two years later, when, on a visit to his native town, he preached in this church of his youth.

Moving with his family to California, he attended high school in Van Nuys. He graduated in 1925 from the University of Southern California with a degree of Bachelor of Arts and the

following fall entered General Theological Seminary in New York City. Upon graduation from seminary he was ordained deacon by Bishop William Bertrand Stevens of Los Angeles and served part of his diaconate in the church of St. Simon in San Fernando, California.

Returning to General Seminary, he was granted the degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology. On April 27, 1929, he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Lloyd, Suffragan Bishop of New York, in St. Mark's Church, Mount Kisco, New York. On June the 19th of the same year he was married in St. Mark's by the Reverend Canon H. Adye Prichard to Sue Berry of Rutherford, New Jersey. The young couple left immediately for the west and Mr. Thelin took up his duties as assistant to the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in Los Angeles. A son, Benjamin, was added to the Thelin household in September, 1930. From 1930 until 1935 the young priest was the Rector of St. Matthew's Church in National City, California, and the Vicar of St. James' in San Diego. The next three years Mr. Thelin served as Vicar of St. Andrew's at La Mesa, and St. John's in Bostonia, California.

In 1938, the Thelins returned to the east, where he became assistant to the Rector of St. Mark's church in Mt. Kisco, and priest-in-charge of St. Stephen's in Armonk, Westchester County, New York. The years of the war were spent in this community and Mr. Thelin became an American citizen. In 1945 he became Rector of St. Stephen's Church in Armonk. Here he did remarkable work. The church was resurrected as the Bishop was about to close the doors forever. Under Mr. Thelin's faithful leadership it became a fine strong parish, with a lively and bustling congregation. A Rectory was purchased, a Parish House was built, and the Church was reconditioned. A plaque has been placed in St. Stephen's commemorating his twelve years service there, of which five were as Rector.

The work of Mr. Thelin in Nyack was one of preparation and growth. Involved was the establishment of a strong program of Christian education; the development of a sense of loyalty

and devotion to the church and its work; and the provision of physical equipment to enable the Parish to meet the challenge of a new age.

During an exceedingly difficult period when the whole Episcopal church was at "sixes and sevens" in the matter of Christian education, the teachers and staff of Grace Church Sunday School, under the guidance of Mr. Thelin did heroic work. Drawing from all resources and personalities, Mr. Thelin loyally pushed forward the tremendous effort to preach and teach the faith, "as this church hath received the same." At the beginning of Mr. Thelin's Rectorship the classes of the church school extended only through eighth grade, and year by year the curriculum was expanded until the four high school classes were in full session. The Rector, a source of inspiration and steadfastness to his teachers, was blessed with deep insight to the needs of fledgling Christians, and a thorough knowledge of the Bible. The effort to impart the faith to the children was a constant satisfaction as their numbers increased and as a faithful attendance bore witness.

It was the inherent conviction of Mr. Thelin that the future of the Church rested upon the teaching of the children, the binding of young hearts with a closer tie to their Creator and Redeemer. There were instruction classes for adults for Confirmation and in Bible Study. The 9:30 a.m. Family Worship Service in the church grew in attendance and interest, and the Rector made a practice of teaching from the aisles. This was skillfully done, with the children participating. The Collect for the Day as well as the Collect for Grace and Peace were said in unison, enabling both children and adults to realize a deeper meaning from the prayers. Held in esteem and affection, from the smallest toddler to the high school student, the Rector was a familiar sight in cassock and cape waiting to greet and receive them on the steps of the church. One of the persistent problems was how to keep a growing school adequately housed and equipped.

The congregation of Grace Church grew in loyalty and appreciation of the work to be done. It is always difficult to evaluate the spirit of a congregation. The necessity to adapt to a growing influence and force is always hard to accept, yet the giving of the people reflected a renewed sense of responsibility and stewardship. There were more who assumed their proper share in the financial burden to be carried and there were those who gave with real sacrifice and love. The budget was doubled and met successfully, the building campaigns were heavy but these too were carried successfully.

With the increasing amount of work laid upon Mr. Thelin and the growth of the Parish, the first assistant to the Rector was the Reverend Joseph Cathcart. Mr. Cathcart and his wife Amedi were with Grace Church for a year, and Mr. Cathcart's warm and happy personality brightened many corners of the Parish.

Mr. Thelin's second assistant was the Reverend James Fisk, on leave from the Canadian Diocese of Quebec. Mr. Fisk and his wife Marjorie were also with Grace Church for a year. This tall, redheaded Anglican was a continual help in all aspects of the parish life. The third man to assist Mr. Thelin was the Reverend Gardner A. Johnson, a strong right arm to the Rector. Mr. Johnson was an experienced mature man, who could quietly and effectively move into any area of the church's work and hold up the Rector's arms. Grace Church benefited from his preaching, visiting, and his work with the young people. Mr. Johnson's kindness and selflessness in carrying on the Parish upon the Rector's resignation will long be remembered.

Mr. Thelin felt that music constitutes a major factor in the worship of the Parish. He was blessed with the help of fine organists and choir directors. His first organist was Mrs. R. Leland Sneden, whose devotion to her work was a source of comfort and strength to the whole parish. Mr. Lawrence Wheeler, who followed Mrs. Sneden as organist, brought boundless energy and an amazing technique. Mr. Victor Powell, whose ability

can never be justly praised, made the latter years of Mr. Thelin's tenure a joy both to Rector and to all who came to Grace Church. These people supported by a fine group of men and women, boys and girls presented Grace Church with church music of the highest caliber.

Mr. Thelin reinstated the custom of having a bazaar to celebrate the anniversary of the church. Held in October, these were lively affairs, lasting two to three days. Often exhausting to the parishioners, these bazaars, nevertheless, taught a lesson. Involving all the women of the church, they taught one to know and love one's neighbor. As a moneymaking project these fairs were unusually successful.

The Festival of Lights held in the Epiphany Season was a beautiful and moving service as was the Flowering of the Cross held on Easter afternoon. Mr. Thelin had placed in the church the ugly and nail studded wooden Cross, the symbol of the depth of sin. In a ceremony more eloquent than words, one by one the children placed their bouquets of spring flowers upon the nails and the Cross was transformed to a thing of beauty.

The Women's Auxiliary continued with its fine work of service to missions, and meetings were held monthly with the usual excellent speakers.

Sue Thelin, along with her husband, gave of herself to all aspects of the women's work in the Parish. Unselfish, scrupulously honest and self-reliant, she helped and served wherever there was a need. Possessed of a brilliant and discerning mind, she was a witty and candid speaker known both in and out of church work. Her contributions to the League of Women Voters of Nyack and her excellent papers delivered to the Thursday Reading Class were invaluable.

Finding no group for young women, the Rector and his wife organized the Rector's Aides. This group of women, as their name implies, tackled all sorts and conditions of tasks set before them. With high spirits and good fun, Christianity became motorized in driving for released time classes, visiting of new

mothers, and running errands throughout the County. From Lenten breakfasts to the Christmas pageant, from small bazaars to large auctions, from Holy Communions to prayer groups, the Aides were drawn deeper to the source of Christian life.

A second group of women formed by Mr. Thelin was the St. Martha's Guild. This organization has successfully produced the Grace Church *MESSENGER*, the monthly newspaper. Assuming the entire financial and editorial burden of the *MESSENGER*, they approached their task with a gaiety and spontaneity, that was reflected in their writing. Sometimes putting on fashion shows, sometimes soliciting advertisements, they have been constantly steadfast and busy and active. The *MESSENGER*, a source of parish news as well as an inspiration, continued to bring great enjoyment to the Parish.

During the period of 1950 to 1960, it seems that Grace Church was always involved in major repairs, alterations, and additions. The expanding Sunday School made necessary the purchase of Babbitt House, formerly a private residence on First Avenue. Repairs to the church structure were a continual and ever-pressing need. The clock and chimes from the old Bell home in South Nyack were installed in the tower, completing a dream of Franklin Babbitt.

In 1956 the move was made to complete the major reconstruction project. The additions and alterations were to provide for thirteen modern Sunday School classrooms, an all-purpose room with a stage, a new sacristy, a lounge with a kitchenette, and a new chapel.

The Building Fund Campaign was opened with a dinner at which Theodore Oxholm, treasurer of the Diocese, so aptly expressed the need for expansion: "You can't remain a good egg all your life. You either have to hatch or go bad!" The hatching of Grace Church was a tremendous effort. Through the faithful work of Wardens, Vestrymen, and the congregation, the work was done. The gift of the beautiful Bradley Chapel by members of the Bradley family, the Patterson bequest, and

the Toms bequest, gave a bright and happy finish to these projects.

The preparations for future work were now done. Progress had been made. When the call came for Harold Thelin to serve as canon of St. James Cathedral, Fresno, California, he felt it was right to respond. Grace Church was ready for another period in its life. New leadership would find a congregation and church plant ready to follow and serve.

The short ten years of Harold Thelin's Rectorship have gone in a twinkling. It seems incredible that so much was accomplished: the physical evidence visible in the church plant, the spiritual inroads known only to God. Patience, fortitude, a winsome happy faith were his. How well he fits the description of the new man found in C. S. Lewis', *Mere Christianity*.

"They are recognizable but you must know what to look for. They will not be very like the idea of 'religious people' which you have formed from your general reading. They do not draw attention to themselves. You tend to think you are being kind to them when they are really being kind to you. They love you more than other men do, but they need you less. They recognize one another immediately and infallibly across every barrier of colour, sex, class, age, and even of creeds."

For Harold Thelin's decade at Grace Church, thanks be to God.



THE BRADLEY CHAPEL



## XI. *The Reverend John Nevin Sayre*

Woven throughout the life of Grace Church has been the generous and able assistance of a quiet and gentle man. John Nevin Sayre, Episcopal clergyman and Christian pacifist, has resided in Rockland County since 1925 when he became a communicant of the Parish. Since then this scholarly man with laughing brown eyes and quick humor has willingly given of his time and abilities to help each successive Rector.

Mr. Sayre was born in Bethlehem, Pa., in 1884, the son of Robert Heyshan Sayre and Martha F. Nevin. Educated at the Hill School in Pennsylvania and the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey, he was graduated from Princeton University in 1907. A member of the Gym Team, an enthusiastic horseman and active in the Christian Association, he was a genial, well-rounded youth. Always of a deeply religious temperament, he decided to enter the ministry, following in the footsteps of many of his forebears. He attended Union Theological Seminary and the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1911. That year he taught Old Testament studies at Princeton and was Director of the student YMCA. Yielding to the missionary call, he went to China to serve in the church at Hankow. Because of ill-health, Mr. Sayre left China after six months work. Traveling westward through Siberia and Russia, he went to Marburg, Germany, to study at the University. He made a flying trip home to assist at the wedding in the White House of his brother, Francis B. Sayre to Jessie Wilson, daughter of the President. After returning to Marburg and visiting the Holy Land, he resumed teaching at Princeton.

He responded to a call from Christ Church, Suffern, New York, and became Rector. During his tenure there, America entered the First World War. Being unable to reconcile the

teachings of Jesus with war, and believing that Christianity and war have always been at variance, he preached pacifism. His courage was both respected and admired. After the war he resigned his Rectorship to teach at the Fellowship of Reconciliation School, at Katonah, New York. In 1920 he was sent by the Fellowship to participate in an International Mission of Reconciliation with Germany.

In 1922, Mr. Sayre married Kathleen Whitaker of Yorkshire, England, in the Episcopal Church in Metuchen, New Jersey. The ceremony was performed by Bishop Paul Jones, and the Sayres have been blessed with three children, Heather, Faith, and William.

Nevin Sayre became a Secretary of the American Fellowship of Reconciliation, and editor of the "World Tomorrow," a Fellowship publication. For twenty years Mr. Sayre was chairman of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. He traveled extensively throughout the world in the interests of peace — organizing, interviewing, and lecturing. He is at present co-treasurer of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation and Secretary of its North American Committee.

Mr. Sayre has been called the great-grandson of the American Revolution by Devere Allen, author of *Adventurous Americans*. Having had two great-great-grandfathers, both clergymen who held opposite views on war and Christianity, there is perhaps a clue to the struggle of Mr. Sayre today.

One great-great-grandfather was the Reverend John Sayre, Rector of the church at Newburgh, New York, and later in Fairfield, Connecticut. John Sayre took seriously Christ's command to give food, drink, clothes, and shelter to all who might come to his Rectory regardless of which side of the war they were on. He refused to sign a pledge required by the colonists to deny "the kind offices of humanity and hospitality" to any who were unfriendly to the Colonists' side. "War and politics belong not to my profession," he declared.

Some months later the British under General Tryon sailed

up Long Island Sound to Fairfield and set fire to the town. A letter from the pastor of the Congregational Church written a week later says that "Mr. Sayre, the Church of England missionary, begged the General to spare the town but was denied. He then begged that some few houses might be spared as a shelter for those who could provide habitations nowhere else; this was denied also." The whole town was burned including the Parsonage of John Sayre who found himself, his wife and eight small children destitute of everything except the garments in which they were clad. As refugees they were taken by the British fleet to New York. After the war he emigrated to Nova Scotia.

The other great-great-grandfather was the Reverend Dominie Carmichael, Scotch by race and temperament, grandnephew of the Duke of Argyle. It was not his idea to keep out of a good fight because he was a man of the cloth. Moved by a letter from George Washington telling of the suffering and hardship at Valley Forge, the Reverend Carmichael did everything he could for the cause except fight hand-to-hand. It has been reported that, after visiting the sick, burying the dead, preaching and holding Divine Services, he ripped off his cassock, leapt on his horse and went to fight, returning to preach the following day. The British put a price on his head:

"Capture him living, capture him dead!"

When the British came to take him, with cool head and Scotch thrift he gathered his family, his silver, and a precious store of salt, and slipped off to the forest, safe in the shelter provided by Indians.

In his famous sermon, "The Holy Catholic Church," Nevin Sayre preaches on the vocation of the true Church, the fellowship of Christians which sheds abroad God's light in the community, in the whole world. John Nevin Sayre is a man respected and revered throughout all of Christendom.

Such a man is John Nevin Sayre, a stout contender of his faith. His family crest (Sayre) shows a strong hand crushing a dragon head.

We are indeed fortunate to know and be served by Mr. Sayre. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

## XII. *The Reverend George F. Regas*

Grace Church approached the centennial without Rector or choirmaster, for Victor Powell had resigned in June, 1960. The Parish, left temporarily in the able hands of the Reverend Gardner A. Johnson, found its attention drawn to a young priest from the South.

George Frank Regas was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, on October 1, 1930, into the Greek Orthodox faith, the youngest of three children of Frank and Edith Regas. His mother died when he was four years old. Soon after that his father, feeling that the language of their native church had become a barrier to true religious understanding and faith, transferred the family to the Episcopal Church. Here, at St. James Church, began a friendship between the Rector, the Reverend Eugene Hopper, and young George Regas of such depth and loyalty that only in retrospect can its influence and importance be fathomed.

Although he was being trained and encouraged to carry on the restaurant business his father had worked so hard to build as security for his children, Mr. Regas' whole ambition throughout his prep school years at Tennessee Military Institute was to become a Doctor of Medicine. However, about this time, while pondering the death of a friend, he first became conscious of a wavering of that desire. He wondered, "Would I rather be a doctor and possibly have given this friend a year or two more of life — or would I rather be a priest, like Mr. Hopper, and possibly have guided this friend through his last illness and helped him to face death with more courage and faith?" The question stirred, and then for the present lay dormant.

In 1949, Mr. Regas entered the University of Tennessee as a pre-med student. At the end of his Sophomore year the old question reasserted itself. Months of prayer, of self-examination, of family discussion served only to strengthen his growing

conviction that he must be a priest in the Anglican Communion.

To his pretty and vivacious young fiancee, Jane Miller, this decision was not surprising. To his father, Frank Regas, it was in some ways a disappointment. Despite this feeling, he stood behind his son with love and pride, encouraging him to make the choice of a seminary carefully and thoughtfully, willing to help in every way. To George Regas it had the effect of unleashing his capabilities. Here was the diametric opposite of an ascetic, monastic theologian: he was elected President of the Student Government, President of the YMCA, President of his fraternity, Kappa Sigma, and the outstanding member of his class in his Sophomore, Junior, and Senior years; truly a leader.

These tasks he combined with his school work and his new role of husband. For on November 25, 1952, Jane Miller and George Regas had been married in Knoxville by Mr. Hopper. In September, 1953, they moved with their new baby, Michele, to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the Episcopal Theological School. Here Mr. Regas applied himself diligently to his chosen work, implementing his training by serving summers as a Chaplain at Massachusetts Memorial Hospital. In 1956 he earned the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, and was ordained deacon by Bishop Barth. That summer the Regas family, which now included Susan, born in 1955, went to Clair College, University of Cambridge, England, for study in the New Testament. Unfortunately, illness forced their return to Tennessee at the end of one year. Although the goal of a doctorate was not reached at that time, George Regas regained his health, and in 1957 he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Vander Horst, and designated Priest-in-charge of the Church of the Messiah in Pulaski, Tennessee. That year his son Timothy was born. Mr. Regas remained in that Parish until June, 1960.

This is the man that Grace Church, Nyack, chose on the eve of the centennial to be the seventh Rector, to guide the Church into its second century. His aims are not widely divergent from those of the men in whose path he follows. They are,

rather, a strengthening and a deepening of the meaning and the understanding through total participation in the life of the Church, laid on the foundation of its first hundred years.

For this foundation on which to continue building — the superb structure and, above all, the rich spiritual heritage — he is deeply grateful.

Not one of the least of his blessings is that Mrs. Osborn, in her seventeenth year as Parish Secretary, is still working patiently and cheerfully. "Ask Ginny; she'll know!" has become a Grace Church password.

Also working with him is Edwin Flath, organist and director of the choirs — which now include the Youth Choir and the Boy Choir as well as the Grace Church Choir and St. Cecelia Choir.

In January, 1961, when Mr. Regas presided for the first time at an Annual Meeting of the Grace Church Parish, he stated what he believes to be the fundamental work of the Church and of this Parish in particular. First always, of course, is worship. But worship, for a church in action, must be directed outward as well as inward. The Church must be articulate, must be concerned with such social problems as race relations in public housing, welfare for refugees, and education. One way of emphasizing this would be to organize the Parish into commissions, each headed by a Vestryman. Among these would be Christian Service, both beyond the Parish as described above, and within it, Evangelism, and Christian Education. This would include classes for adults as well as young people; it would give parents the information and understanding about the Sunday School curriculum they need to serve as a stronger link between child and church; it would include also an audio-visual department to augment and add depth to the whole program. These, he feels, are some of the outward signs of a church in action.

Above all, he bade the Parish work toward a deepening of the spiritual life through worship, through Holy Communion, and through prayer.

On Wednesday evenings during Lent in 1961, he conducted services followed by discussion periods. The theme of the series was prayer and personal religion, for it is his firm conviction that any constructive and lasting action of a parish will come only when its spiritual life has individual depth and understanding.

To the handful of men who met in William Stillwell's home in 1861, to the 700 communicants in 1961, Grace Church in the village of Nyack in the county of Rockland, has been a source of continuing strength.

"Individuals come and go, but the Church which the Son of God established will remain to continue its needed and noble work. It will go on, keeping alive and elevating the moral tone of the community, and setting before it noble examples of the application to human action of the higher sanction than that of public opinion. Whatever is done for it is done for the good of mankind."

— THE REVEREND FRANKLIN BABBITT

## *WARDENS OF GRACE CHURCH*

James S. Aspinwall .....	1861-1874
William S. Stillwell .....	1861-1874
Daniel Ullman .....	1874-1875
Frederick L. Nichols .....	1874-1889
William C. Moore .....	1875-1881
George Wilcoxson .....	1881-1881
Fayette Byington .....	1882-1885
James Weeks .....	1885-1901
George Stanton .....	1889-1891
Gilbert H. Crawford, Sr. ....	1891-1910
William Alexander Smith .....	1901-1911
Arthur C. Tucker .....	1910-1915
Joseph Hilton .....	1912-1913
James Kilby .....	1913-1936
William O. Ross .....	1916-1924
Dr. Charles D. Kline .....	1924-1936
Dr. S. W. S. Toms .....	1936-1945
Arthur B. Churchill .....	1936-1951
Edward J. Gilhuley, Sr. ....	1945-1954
Alan Leggett .....	1951-1956
Orville Mann .....	1954-1959
Tarlton F. Parsons .....	1956-
Robert Osborn .....	1959-

## *MEMORIALS IN GRACE CHURCH*

### *GIFT*

### *IN MEMORIAM*

Altar .....	J. M. Lupton Bogart
Altar Cross .....	Elizabeth C. Hard
Eucharistic Candles .....	David W. Cranston
Small Vases .....	Emily B. Hunt
Altar Missal and Missal Stand .....	Elizabeth C. Hard
Four Alms Basons .....	The Rev. Franklin Babbitt
Credence Tables .....	William S. Stillwell
Chancel Chair .....	Edward N. Ebbets
Bishop's Chair .....	Mrs. Franklin Babbitt
Communion Vessels .....	Grace Merritt Stewart
Communion Linen .....	Emily Babbitt
Altar Linen .....	Mrs. Franklin Babbitt
Reredos Panel—"The Last Supper"....	Amelia Goodin Ullman
Reredos Panel — "The Crucifixion"....	Adele Smith
Reredos Panel—"The Road to the Cross" .....	Daniel Ullman
Reredos Panel — "Come Unto Me"....	Emily Babbitt
Reredos Panel — "The Infancy" .....	The Rev. Franklin Babbitt
Communion Rail .....	Elizabeth C. Hard
Altar Gate .....	Allen Park Toms
Organ .....	Henry P. Noll
Choir Stalls .....	Fayette Byington
Processional Cross .....	Edward Merritt
Clergy Stall .....	Joseph H. Camp
Prayer Desk .....	William B. Conrad
Pulpit .....	given by Mrs. P. H. Bryson
Pulpit Cross .....	Elizabeth C. Hard
Litany Desk and Book .....	Elizabeth C. Hard
Font Ewer .....	Andrew Leiner
Alms Box .....	Emily Babbitt
Lectern Bible .....	Maria L. Ebbets
Font .....	William De Witt Barclay
Organ Chimes .....	John W. Dalley, Jr.
Bishop's Desk .....	The Rev. Franklin Babbitt
Large Alms Bason .....	Elizabeth C. Hard

*GIFT**IN MEMORIAM*

Chancel and Altar Lights.....	The Rev. Franklin Babbitt
Chimes Amplification System.....	David Winfield Cranston
Memorial Organ Lamp.....	Henry G. Noll
Baptism Bowl for Font.....	Charles W. Kunze
Communion Bread Ciborium.....	Charles W. Kunze
Prayer Book for Chancel.....	Margaret M. Northedge
Prayer Book for Chancel.....	Harry M. Doersch, Jr.
Tower Stairway .....	Doris Eleanor Witte
Sacristy, improved and remodeled.....	Josephine Smith Cameron
Organ, enlarged, rebuilt, and dedicated to the memory of.....	Henry P. Noll
Sanctuary Prayer Desk.....	John Messeder
Sanctuary Prayer Desk.....	William Kirkpatrick
Altar Missal .....	Jeanette Gurnee Youmans
Prayer Book .....	John Messeder
Chancel Screen .....	John Messeder
Prayer Book .....	George C. Haire
Litany Book .....	Elizabeth Looser Essex
Brass Altar Vases .....	William G. Lang
Altar Appointments (Burse and Chalice Veil) .....	Ralph Dondero
Two Candelabra and Cross.....	John R. Fellows
Seasonal Hangings .....	George O. Harris
"Peace of God" Altar Vases.....	George & Martha Williams William Mark & Elizabeth Wakeman (John Williams Family)
"Peace of God" Candlesticks.....	Richard B. Ferris, Jr. Donald R. Tasman
Prayer and Communion Rail.....	Carrie Wilson Blanchard
Altar Missal .....	Elizabeth Orr Toms
Outdoor Sign .....	Members of Nyack Community Ambulance Corps
Altar Cross and Missal Stand.....	Vaughan L. D. Higinson
Silver Vase .....	The Rev. Franklin Babbitt
Crystal Cruets with Silver Tops.....	"In Memoriam" Miss Berry
Memorial Vestibule (July, 1934) .....	In memory of: Gilbert Holmes Crawford

*GIFT**IN MEMORIAM*

Memorial Vestibule (July, 1934) .....	John Flender Alfred Bell Louisa Garner Edmund Walker Robert Osborn, Sr. Harry Essex John W. Churchill Helen Mary Mann Dr. Harvey Gilchrest Evalina Gilchrest Eula Gilchrest Maria Ebbets
Hymnals .....	Josephine Smith Cameron
Chapel Cruets .....	James P. Kilby
Chapel Curtain .....	John R. Fellows
Lang Memorial Kitchen (1948) .....	Edith J. Lang
Silver Baptismal Shell .....	Barbara Jeanne and Calvin Wayne La Frence
Cross and Candlesticks for Kindergarten	
Altar .....	Barbara Jeanne and Calvin Wayne La Frence
Bradley Chapel (1958) .....	Bradley Family
Chapel Organ .....	Mrs. Stephen Rowe Bradley
Chapel Linen .....	Mrs. John Knox, Sr.
*Patterson Hall (1959) .....	Judge Mortimer B. Patterson
*Reconstruction of Office Wing of Parish House (1959) .....	Dr. Samuel W. S. Toms
	* Judge Patterson and Dr. Toms left endowments to Grace Church out of which these two construction and renovation projects were partially financed. The remainder is now in an endowment fund.
Litany Book .....	In name of members of the Friendly Society
Font Roll .....	Lt. Edmund L. Dornburgh
Prayer Desk .....	Margaret Nelson Douglas
Individual Communion Service.....	Weeks
Silver Vase .....	Mr. Pinkney

*GIFT*

Installation of the Bell Memorial  
Chapel Clock and Chimes.....

*IN MEMORIAM*

In memory of  
Sallie Nesbit Merritt  
Schuchardt

*Donors:*

Charles Carroll  
Miss Mary Virginia  
Parkhurst  
Miss Edwina Babcock  
William P. Babcock  
Mrs. R. W. D. Jewett  
Gilbert H. Crawford  
Mrs. George DeJong  
Mrs. Albert Traverson  
Orville H. Mann  
Mortimer B. Patterson  
Mary Hackett  
William G. Cole, Sr.  
Mrs. Lillian Janato  
Friendly Society  
William B. Schupner

In memory of Louis Sosna

In memory of Mary Madeline Coffey (from the  
Hawvermale family)

Bishop William L. Essex  
Debra Lynn Sneden

In memory of Mrs.  
Requardt (from Mrs.  
Edward Leber)

In memory of Mary  
Madeline Coffey (from  
Madeline Coffey)

In memory of Louisa  
Mooney (from Mrs.  
Louise Lepert)

*GIFT*

*IN MEMORIAM*

Tapestry .....	Frank Griswold Hall
Pew No. 3—2nd in North Center Aisle..	William B. and Laura V. Conrad
Pew No. 25—13th in North Aisle.....	Edith Stillwell
Pew No. 37—3rd in South Aisle.....	Maria Harrison
Pew No. 25—2nd in North Aisle.....	John Dalley

*WINDOWS*

*Chancel*

East Window .....	Charles A. Brush
Side Window .....	Donald Mitchell Nichols

*Rose Window*

William Alexander Smith, Jr., Douglas Charles Smith  
by the Children of the Church

*South Aisle*

George Wilcoxin	W. S. W.
Elizabeth Cadmus Hard	James B. McAdam

Gedney

*North Aisle*

D. A. C. Cushman; M. C. S. Cushman
T. P. R.; A. T. R.
Charles Folsom
Prall
Grace Merritt Stewart; Edward Merritt
Grace Crocheron Merritt
Cornelia Trimble Merritt Davidson

## TABLETS

Ann Byington .....	1903
John William Schmidt	
George P. Pollen Schmidt	
B. McEvers Schmidt	
Margaret Smith	
John W. Harrison .....	1906
Maria Harrison .....	1925
Priscilla Stilwell .....	1904
War Memorial Tablet (1925).....	St. Andrew's Guild
Tablet to commemorate the 25th year of the rectorship of The Reverend Franklin Babbitt, 1861-1886	
Bruce Memorial Tablet .....	1936
Chapel Entrance Sign in memory of Confirmation Class of 1937	
Bronze Plaque in memory of James and Sophia Pacey.....	1940

*In addition to these Memorials, over the years Grace Church  
has gratefully received gifts and favors too numerous to  
acknowledge here.*









